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# **In the Twilight Zone of Aid Bureaucracy**

**A study of Social Policy Entrepreneurs**

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**Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor  
of Philosophy in Social Anthropology**

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Oct - 2016

### **Statement**

The thesis, whether in the same or different form, has not been previously submitted to this or any other university for a degree

## **ABSTRACT**

This research studies undocumented policy practices within UK aid in general and the Department for International Development (DFID) in particular. It focuses on the policy practices or initiatives taken by various actors in influencing and shaping policy in the everyday life of aid bureaucracy. For this purpose, I have chosen as case study the evolution of DFID's Social exclusion (policy) framework within the timeframe of 1997-2010.

The research findings identify undocumented initiatives taken by the policy entrepreneurs within aid bureaucracy. These efforts are directed not only towards benefitting the global poor but also at increasing institutional efficacy in delivering aid. Policy entrepreneurs execute these policy practices, also termed policy entrepreneurship, proactively on the political, administrative, and executive levels. Anthropological analysis and methods allow me to look beyond formal policy processes at the undocumented policy practices.

Many development professionals, consultants, and office bearers while walking on the tight rope of internal policy and bearing the cross of the highly politicized organizational culture of the DFID, skilfully conveyed advice based on empirical insights to those high up. They transfer their disciplinary knowledge and empirical understandings to the policy makers and political actors in the larger interest of the development industry as well as the poor from recipient countries.

On the one hand, from an anthropological perspective, this study broadens our understanding of the classical rational model of decision making within the bureaucracy. On the other hand, in the context of contemporary DFID bureaucracy, it highlights how civil servants resolve the moral-political conflict between their obligations towards the institutions they work with and

their solidarity towards issues of human rights and social justice through their activism and policy entrepreneurial spirit.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my both supervisors Prof. Raminder Kaur Kahlon and Dr. Peter Luetchford for their continuous support to my Ph.D study and research. I shall always remain grateful to them for their patience, motivation, moral support, and proactive supervising. Their guidance and empathy helped me in the times of PhD blues as well as other mortal administrative quandaries.

I would like to heartily thank Katy Viflic from Student Life Support Centre; University of Sussex for her helping hand and smile that always gave me hope. I owe thanks to James Gordon & Jo from the International student support. I also wish to thank Gana Aloysius, Maya Unnithan, Fillipo Osella, Katy Gardner, Pamela Kea, Buzz Harrison, Sushrut Jadhav, Jayne Pauline, Jo Blake, Camilla Briault, Clare Rogers, my managers and lovely colleagues from ASDA Hollingbury, the kind Paul Warwick, Scott Bambro, Greg Cooper and all my favourite ASDA colleagues Arpana and Fariana, Shakeel, Aliya, Syed, Haresh, Rajvinder and Rashi and customers from ASDA Hounslow, for their motivation and support.

I want to offer special thanks to the Royal Anthropological Institute for Sutosoma Award and the Ambedkar Association from North America (AANA) for their Advance Studies Scholarship.

Many thanks to Ned Dostaler who has been great help in proofreading. Heartfelt thanks to Mr & Mrs. Shrirang Kambleji, Vijay Paralkar Sir, Mr & Mrs Chaman Virdeeji, Satpal ji Mumman, Mr & Mrs Tirpude, Mr & Mrs Bhatkar, Prakash Jadhav, Ranjeet Boudh, Adinath, Harshdeep, Sandeep, Lalit Khandare, Dheeraj Ganvir and all activists those who have been directly and indirectly helped me in my journey to PhD and I have forgotten to mention.

Last but not least a heartfelt tribute to the perennial source of my inspiration, Babasaheb Dr. Bhimraoji Ambedkar, and thanks to my mother and my father for being there for me through thick and thin.

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## List of acronyms

**BRICS** – Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa

**DFID** –Department for International Development

**CDA** - Critical Discourse Analysis

**GA** – Governance Advisor

**ICAI** – Independent Commission for Aid Impact

**IDS** – Institute of Development Studies

**IDTs** – International Development Targets

**ILO** – International Labour Organization

**IMF** –International Monetary Fund

**IPAP** – International NGOs Partnership Agreement Programme

**MDG** –Millennium Development Goals

**OECD** – Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

**PRSP** – Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers

**SDA** – Social Development Advisor

**SEF** – Social Exclusion Framework

**SETF** –Social Exclusion Task Force

**SEU** –Social Exclusion Unit

**SIDA** – Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

**UKAid** – Broader products and projects run by DFID comes under the comprehensive term of UKAid

**UNDP** – United Nations Development Program

**WB** – World Bank

**WDR** – World Development Report



## Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION



### 1.1 In the cottage of Cinderella

It was a cold evening in November 2014. The weather was rather chilly and getting colder with the receding day. We just had a delicious homemade English dinner. I was sitting in a chair in front of the fireplace in a warm cottage in north London with a cheerful lady. She is in her mid-sixties but seems to have a childlike chuckle in her eyes. She is a former bureaucrat from the Department for International Development (DFID). The deep satisfaction about her eventful career in DFID is written on her face and is reflected in her every word she says. She savours the incidents from her past as she confides in me:

“Although we social development advisors did not always agree with each other, we had unanimity of objective and it was to be instrumental at our level best in global poverty alleviation. From the point of view of politically seasoned diplomats, this was a naive and too idealistic endeavour on our part. Probably this is why senior officials from Foreign Office (FO) called DFID ‘the Cinderella Department’ – a department run by idealist women with unrealistic ideas. But this was not without internal resistance and technical obstacles raised within the department. We were learning our own little ways around to get the things done within aid bureaucracy and overarching political “dictates”.

I joined the DFID headquarters in London after working in different positions in various DFID country offices in South Asia for nearly five years. Despite on and off internal friction between departments DFID then was a vibrant work place pulsating with new ideas. There was a sense of freedom and agency to the extent that you could pursue what you thought would produce value for the institution. In those days social exclusion policy was, a much talked about concept. I was quite enthusiastic about it due to my latest grassroots work experiences with women from the socially excluded communities from South Asia. I was convinced that the social exclusion framework should be employed in aid policy to South Asia, as the women from socially excluded communities were the worst off victims of gender inequality in the health sector. However, not many of my colleagues were thinking on the same lines. Some were upholding the rights-based approach while others were focused on a gender in development agenda. I could not sit idle; the emails from the field, the information shared by local activists and the hapless faces of illiterate anaemic women queuing for treatment in remote health centres miles away from their hamlets would not let me sleep. After taking stock of the situation, I planned a three-pronged strategy, which had to be implemented in parallel.

I joined forces with the political actors, vis-a-vis proactively engaged and encouraged a civil society organization working on social exclusion in South Asia for lobbying. Simultaneously, I started rigorous person-to-person persuasion on an individual level and networking the like-minded development professional from the DFID in particular and the UK Aid<sup>1</sup> in general to create consensus on the social exclusion policy framework. Eventually, our efforts paid off and the DFID aid resources were channelled towards the aid programs focussed on gender and health, concentrating on health facilities

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<sup>1</sup> Abbreviation for Department of International Development, UK also called ‘UK Aid’, Available on : <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Work-with-us/corporatecommunications/> Accessed on 28/11/2014

to women from socially excluded communities. No needs to mention the programs were based on the social exclusion framework.”

The excerpt above from my field notes is one of the key testimonies by an informant about their voluntary and self-motivated but strategic policy endeavours as a policy entrepreneur within the aid bureaucracy.

### **1.1.1 An overview of chapter**

This thesis focuses on the extra-official activities or undocumented policy processes whereby, the development practitioners and aid bureaucrats whom I call “social policy entrepreneurs” who attempt to influence the policy practices and shape the policy in the everyday life of aid bureaucracy. This thesis identifies the phenomenon by looking at the nature of these undocumented policy practices and intention behind them. This study examines how these activities were conducted, who conducts these activities, and what is the rationale behind these policy practices. This research also reflects on the problems of access to the inner circles of aid bureaucracy as well as aid organizations, which sheds light on the complex work cultures of the premiere aid bureaucracies.

This chapter attempts to unpack the main argument of the thesis while evaluating the theoretical authorities from the field of social sciences and social anthropology. The first section of this chapter elaborates the main argument and key terms employed in the thesis. It gives a short account of the research problem. The second section provides a description of the empirical focus on the key research themes. The key themes are concerning the evolution of social exclusion policy framework along with a short historical account of the conceptual framework, further elaborating how the social exclusion concept emerged and changed over



the time. The third section gives the theoretical overview of the complementary theoretical framework that I am using to support my argument. It will also provide a brief discussion on these theoretical approaches used in the context of the research, the key institutions, and stakeholders. While section four offers an overview of all chapters from the thesis.

This research is not solely about an institution called DFID nor is it about its standard operating practices in the formal organizational bureaucratic set-up. This research examines the voluntary policy practices and personal strategies applied by social policy entrepreneurs in their everyday life within the international aid bureaucracy to help poor communities on grassroots. It focuses on the undocumented practices they perform that go beyond their regular official obligations within institutions so as to benefit the poor communities. However, this thesis does allude to the organizational structure of the DFID and explore the evolutionary processes of the social exclusion policy framework within DFID from the lens of extra-official policy practices.

### **1.1.2 A note on DFID**

DFID is UK's premier aid organization, which administers and coordinates various flows of development aid from the UK aimed towards global poverty alleviation. This aid enterprise is done while calibrating with United Nation's international development goals, that is the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)<sup>2</sup> in the past and Sustainable Development Goals in the present. DFID is an independent department of UK Aid headed by a Permanent Secretary under a separate cabinet level minister. The Permanent Secretary is the most senior civil

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<sup>2</sup> Available on :<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-international-development/about>  
Accessed on 16/12/2015

servant in the department who chairs the Executive Management Committee that provides strategic direction of the management of DFID's operations, staff, and financial resources.<sup>3</sup> There are five offices in DFID: Country Programmes, Economic Development, Finance, and Corporate Performance, Policy and Global Programmes and special country programme for the Middle East and Humanitarian and Conflict. Individual Director Generals, a Head of Top Management Group and the Principal Private Secretary is accountable to the Permanent Secretary who heads these offices. Most of the action researched for this study falls within the ambit of the subdivision or department under the Director General of the Policy, and Global Programmes, who is responsible for the development, support and the promotion of policy. This department directly assists in poverty alleviation and achievements of the MDGs. The Director General works closely with the Head of Research and DFID's research program to ensure a strong two-way relationship between policy and research.<sup>4</sup> The abovementioned analytical framework of social exclusion was adopted by DFID for poverty alleviation from Latin American, South African and South Asian countries in 1997 (See Chapter 4 : Section I).

### **1.1.3 Undocumented practices**

With regard to undocumented practices, it is clear that the nature of extra-official practices is defined in terms of formality in relation to standard official procedures. However, I am aware of the blurred line between formal and informal practices within institutional set ups that makes it difficult to make a distinction between what is formal and what is informal. The

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<sup>3</sup> Available on : <https://www.gov.uk/government/people/mark-lowcock>  
Accessed on :15/14/2015

<sup>4</sup> Available on: <https://secure-reference.data.gov.uk/2014-09-30/doc/public-body/dfid/unit/tmg>  
Accessed on 15/12/2015

formal, official ways involve the institutional ways of doing things that involves a specific code of conduct, documentation, limited spheres of preordained activities, systemized forms of practices and processes of policy making. In contrast, by informal, I mean implicitly carried out activities those are of an extra-official, voluntary, and mundane nature but of political-strategic import. These seemingly mundane activities have a cumulative effect on achieving the social mobility and economic development of recipient communities as well as aid delivery.

The informal ways of doing things impinge upon the formal or standard official practices. In *Seeing Like a State*, Scott states that, “the formal order, to be more explicit, is always and to some considerable degree parasitic on informal processes, which the formal scheme does not recognize, without which it could not exist and which it alone cannot create or maintain” (Scott 1998:310). Scott (1998:256) illustrated this by a form of action called “work to rule” during which the workers went on strike rather than stopping their jobs, meticulously observing job manuals verbatim to the effect that production is practically stopped.

The above illustration of “work to rule” helps us to see the overlapping and inseparable nature of formal and informal modes of work in the entire spectrum of human practices in the aid organization like any other institutions (Crewe and Young 2002 p: v). Along the lines of Crewe’s (2014: 674) argument, I use the term “organizations,” merely to describe the boundaries of what I am studying (as opposed to families, communities) but neither organizations nor institutions serve as explanatory concepts. As Crewe (2014:673) points out the institutionalist approaches that “depict institutions as sets of rules and norms that exist within and between organizations... downplay the heterogeneity, individual agency, and contractions those are vital for explaining change and dynamism” within institutions, hence

making it difficult to map the phenomena like implicit and undocumented policy practices. Nevertheless, the term social policy entrepreneur employed throughout the thesis implies the development practitioners, aid bureaucrats, policy practitioners, development agents, or social development professionals working with DFID or UKAid are directly or indirectly engaged in the voluntary policy processes and development intervention in the larger interest of poor communities.

#### **1.1.4 The problematic of popular policy perceptions**

A general assumption about policy making revolves around the formal policy making practices, that “an idea becoming a bill, elected officials vote on it, and if all goes well, the bill gets enacted into law” (Stachowaik 2009:1). This is a simplistic linear model of policy-making, which entails the identification of the problem, deciding the policy of solution and implementation of the policy (Sutton 1999:9). On a political, bureaucratic levels this involves formal-official brainstorming, such as commissioning research, sponsoring and organizing conferences, workshops, seminars, publishing the related literature like working papers, White papers and moving the motion, drafting bills, getting them passed, implementing policy, regulation of material and human resources through state-run institutions. These procedures or processes are prominently perceived as top-bottom processes with descending flow of ideas where the top-level policymakers and administrators do all the brainstorming, take key policy decisions and the bureaucratic hierarchy in descending order implement what they have been told in the order of authoritative hierarchy.

However, the above-discussed dominant discourse of policymaking tells us little about the autonomous junctures or interstices within bureaucratic institutions wherein the authorities

are subverted and hierarchies are bypassed. It does not tell us much about why certain policies come into fruition while others do not. Nor does it tell us about how policy changes are successfully promoted and facilitated irrespective of the dominant policy paradigms. Therefore, in engaging with the abovementioned questions this study attempts to explore this “semi-autonomous twilight zone” and the cognate policy processes and practices within the overarching architecture of aid bureaucracy.

Scott (1998:6) states, “informal practices are an essential feature of any real, functioning social order” (in our case an institutional set up). Some studies do point out the entangled nature of policy processes and complexities in terms of strategic policy interventions that involve the roles of knowledge, networks and political context and opportunity windows (Crewe and Young 2002: vi; Jones 2009:5; Hummelbrunner and Jones 2013). This thesis documents the way the above-mentioned informal policy practices or activities feature during the policymaking and implementation stages yet seldom documented.

The basic nature of these activities is quite mundane, casual, regular and hence informal but of political and strategic import from the development perspective. The subjective understanding of right and wrong, individual convictions concerning good and bad, just and unjust guide these activities rather than the canon of institutional behavioural propriety or organizational dictates about the bureaucratic code of conduct. It may also be out of biased perceptions about theories or ideas based on first-hand empirical knowledge. It could be about making a case or lobbying for certain projects or policies voluntarily with aid of like-minded people within and out the formal setup of the aid institutions. (See chapter 6)

These policy practices and strategies are non-profit and non-commercial in nature but strive to produce social value in collaboration with people and organizations engaged in social

innovations that usually imply economic activity (Hulgard 2010:297). However, due to the dynamic and contingent relationship between formal and informal ways of doing things in institutional settings, formal practices suppress the informal one. As Scott (1998:6) observes, “the parasitic nature of the formal organizational scheme of work suppresses the informal processes” rendering them to be unacknowledged hence undocumented. I demonstrate this informality through an empirical account of the voluntary but strategic policy practices of social development practitioners as they shape policy ideas and practices. Here I am not only concerned about the trajectory of policy within aid institutions but also the non-profit informal endeavours of various actors. These actors are called “social policy entrepreneurs” like “social development entrepreneurs”,<sup>5</sup> who go beyond mere aspirations of altruism, without expectation of economic interest, and with solidarity and moral responsibility towards the poor and socially excluded communities.

I argue that policy formation and implementation are not entirely a top-down flow of ideas, formal/official, hegemonic, systematic linear process, but fraught with political ups and downs, contending ideas, and discontinuities that essentially tread through the twilight zones of extra-official undocumented policy practices. These key informal policy practices involve strategic ideological assertions, indirect counselling, briefing, implicit, and explicit advocacy, and systematic utilization of agency on the part of key stakeholders and actors within the donor institutions and the recipient countries that eventually actualize the policy in the everyday life of the aidland.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Hulgard (2010:6) employed this term through the lens of Human economy approach to defining the individuals who are engaged in private, non-profit endeavours toward the social development of public in various levels of institutions and bureaucracies.

<sup>6</sup> Aidland is a ‘metaphor’ employed by Raymond Apthorpe ( 2011b:198 ) for the “realm of development aid policy and practices”

In terms of the case study of the social exclusion policy framework in DFID, it would be helpful to see from the theoretical point of view of how the gradual policy changes were worked out, introduced, and advocated during the emergence of social exclusion theme in the DFID. However, this would entail the assumption of social exclusion policy framework as an idea or conceptual framework. Once we assume it this way, it could be interpreted through the concept of the social life of ideas (Appadurai 1995:4) while examining the origin and trajectory of social exclusion framework. Here the social life of ideas would imply the life cycle or movement of ideas through social actors and context. The social life of idea is characterized by the propagation, circulation, internalization, production, contention, and dissemination of ideas and conceptual frameworks. These ideas and themes are embedded in the social, political, cultural, and economic spheres of life, internal social structures, across the institutions, organizations, and networks of professionals and people before and after their emergence as policy themes and frameworks.

## **1.2 Empirical focus**

The empirical focus of this research is to study DFID and related bureaucrats, civil servants, and the policymakers. This is a study of a subset of professionals and civil servants from the international aid organizations who are defined as social policy entrepreneurs. These people are engaged in participatory and non-profit activities. The aim of these activities termed as social development enterprises is to benefit the global poor. Various stakeholders are affected by these types of activities (Defourny and Nyssens 2010: 289) in our case are aid bureaucracy, politicians, civil society organizations from both donor and recipient countries and target poor communities.

The research is done particularly but not exclusively in the light of case study of DFID's Social Exclusion Policy (SEP) framework between 1997 and 2010. This study centres on the dramatic journey of the SEP framework, related actors and the circumstances that played a critical role in the framework's inception and traction in DFID and beyond from 1997 to 2010. As a conceptual analytical framework, the social exclusion framework spearheaded the paradigm shift in poverty analysis in European nations and international development industry from the 1990s onwards (Room 1995:3). The lifespan of the SEP framework in DFID coincided with the regime of New Labour government until the policy shift followed by the accession of the Conservative Party to power in the UK. This policy transition and its context are exclusively discussed in Chapter 4.

Social exclusion as a term and conceptual framework for poverty analysis originated in France in the late 1960s as a part of a local initiative by a Polish priest called Wrezinski who intended to work out a program for the "poor next door" to his parish.<sup>7</sup> His intentions were more religious and social than political. Once the humble efforts of the priest started gaining popularity from the point of view of the inclusion of those who were excluded from French mainstream society, this concept was adopted as a term to signify about 10 percent of the French population by the French Ministry of Policy (de Haan 2001:23). Once the humble efforts of the priest started gaining popularity, the French Ministry of Policy adopted this concept as a term to signify about 10 percent of the French population, a step towards inclusion of the excluded into the French mainstream society (de Haan 2001:23). In addition, the increase in the academic-political awareness about the failed promises of welfare states in post-World War Europe accelerated the process of the emergence and

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<sup>7</sup> Available on <http://www.atd-quartmonde.org/ATD-Quart-Monde-la-memoire-des.html>, Accessed on : 12/08/2014



acceptance of social exclusion as a conceptual framework (Room 1995:9). Later the European commission adopted this conceptual framework to assess poverty in European countries due to the ineffectiveness of conventional economic criteria (Room 1995: 11). On the theoretical front, the analytical framework of social exclusion took into consideration the non-economic basis of poverty-analysis, highlighting the social, cultural, and political-structural causes of exclusion against in addition to the economic criteria applied by the earlier knowledge-regimes and governments (Silver 1994:532). The social exclusion framework stressed on the political and social structural reasons of poverty rather than the unequal income alone, which was considered the prominent cause of poverty (Saith 2001:10). Kabeer (2000) observes that after the World Summit for Social Development<sup>8</sup> in 1994, there was an increased attention towards the utility of the social exclusion concept in reference to the issues of poverty, inequality, and social justice in developing countries among the Institute of International Labour Studies, the Asian Development Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the World Bank.

Silver (1994:532) classified this concept into the threefold typology of solidarity, specialization, and monopoly that encompasses multiple meanings of exclusion. This is further distinguished between different theoretical perspectives, political ideologies, and national discourses of respective countries that accepted and accommodated this concept accordingly. France for example, looked at social exclusion through the lens of solidarity while UK looked at it from the liberal perspective and so on (Silver 1994:539, de Haan 2011). In addition, this schema provided an explanation of multiple forms of social

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<sup>8</sup> A convention of over 100 heads of State and Governments agreed to meet in Copenhagen, Denmark on November 1994 as per the United Nations General Assembly resolution 47/92, to tackle the critical problems of poverty, unemployment, and social integration  
Available on : <http://www.iisd.ca/vol10/1037001e.html>, accessed on 11/11/2012

disadvantage such as economic, social, political, and cultural, which covers a range of theories of citizenship and racial-ethnic inequality as well as poverty and long-term unemployment. Social exclusion policy used to be part of the UK government's domestic policy. Up until 2010, it has its internal politics and articulation in the country. The consecutive defeats of the Labour party led to brainstorming within the party that resulted in the 1992 party manifesto prepared by the late John Smith, MP, and leader of Labour party. This manifesto talked about poverty in the UK as an issue of social injustice (Haddon 2012:1-5). It planned and proposed to build renewal strategies for Britain and its underclass to bring them into the national mainstream. A commission was appointed to produce a report on poverty and social exclusion in the UK that stressed a dire need to address poverty within the English society (Haddon 2012:5). Poverty in English society was considered to be the consequence of the exclusion of the majority from the mainstream due to many social reasons like unemployment, school dropout etc. (SEU brochure 2004). In addition to sending messages to the former Labour vote bank and attracting the emergent lower middle class, this political initiative offered a new approach to include the poor and to understand poverty in the UK compared to the economic parameters applied by Conservative governments (Haddon 2012:11).

The Commission on Social Justice established by Labour party leader late John Smith (1934-1994) culminated into IPPR report on *The condition of Britain: Strategies for Social renewal*, this report had a deep impact on the future social policies of victorious Labour party (IPPR 1994, SEU 2004). Mandelson who was a close confidant of then Prime Minister Tony Blair formed SEU (Social Exclusion Unit) in 1997 (Peters and Besley 2014:107). Later on, the

minister of international development and team of Social development advisors for research and policy division DFID played a crucial role in upholding social exclusion framework.

### **1.2.1 Aid Bureaucracy: an Overview**

This section sets a scene for us to understand the institutional background of undocumented policy practices. Moreover, it offers a brief overview of the salient features of aid institutions and bureaucracy that sustain the development industry through its circular activities of knowledge production and project management. These continuous policy processes involve creating policy consensus and producing development knowledge that legitimizes and rationalizes the continual development intervention (Cornwall and Brock 2005:5). In addition, this section underlines the importance of studying the intermediary actors that play crucial roles in the policy formations and the emergence of policy themes by virtue of their inter-organizational movements and professional experiences in the aid industry.

Aid institutions, overseas development organizations, international economic institutions (like World Bank), think tanks (like the Institute of Development Studies and the Overseas Development Institute) play key roles as processors, producers, and managers in the production and management of development knowledge (Broad 2007:700). Here development knowledge implies demographic, statistical-economic data produced and published by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) in addition to DFID's internal resources produced by their satellite think tanks. This is what Mosse calls "paradigm maintenance" (2011: 16). These form the basis of the development ideas and themes that in turn form the basis of projects and policies. Later, those who adopted these concepts and

themes reworked and redefined them to serve their current or long-term purposes. Knowledge production, management, dissemination, and commissioning of research to various academics and researchers are the key activities of these aid institutions other than managing aid and development interventions in recipient countries (Broad 2007:700-1).

The entire organizational structure of DFID and associated organizations described above influence the bureaucratic actions and ambiance within these organizations. Another phenomenon that turns these organizations into fertile grounds for the exchange of ideas, with international, political, and economic undercurrents is the movement of the civil servants, bureaucrats and development professionals between Europe based aid institutions like DFID and the World Bank, the IMF, and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). As my fieldwork, data shows in Chapter 4, this augments the political propensity of the UK government to abide by the policy dictates of the World Bank. The terminologies, concepts, and policy themes upheld by individuals and collectives reflects this exchange of international ideas and concepts is reflected in at any given time (Cornwall and Eade 2010). The nature of the flow of ideas, its internalization on the individual as well as network and institutional level is a complex phenomenon. The political pressures and decrees that arise out of the politically skewed or biased understandings and viewpoints of ministers and senior civil servants regarding the entire project of international development assistance compound the complexity. However, this did not stop social policy entrepreneurs or social development entrepreneurs from exerting their agency and shaping top-down policy communication.

This was the reason behind including the social development advisors (SDAs), governance advisors, aid-managers, policymakers, and experts from international non-government

organizations (INGOs) like Action Aid and Christian Aid as well in the study. It provided an opportunity to study the knowledge interface between institutional structure and individuals (Long 2001:277). The policy-projects of DFID or UK Aid focus on the issues of education, health, gender inequality, and social exclusion in order to tackle chronic poverty in middle-income countries such as India and Brazil. These programs are run through the International NGOs Partnership Agreement Programme (IPAP), a joint venture between seven UK-based INGOs.<sup>9</sup> A management agency coordinates with these seven INGOs for DFID. However, as Action Aid and Christian Aid are main collaborators of the DFID I have chosen some informants from these INGOs for this study along with the DFID.

### 1.2.2 Theoretical overview

I utilize the theoretical framework of “social life of things” (Appadurai 1995:4) to theorize the social life of policy ideas and I supplement this with an actor-oriented approach so as to look at the informal or undocumented policy practices. Along with, I discuss the concept of *solidarity economie* to help me understand the main intention behind those policy practices (Peattie 1987; Lars 2010; Hart 2010). I combine critical discursive analysis (CDA) and an actor-oriented approach to policy formation and practices to show that actors are not passive conductors of top-down flows of policy ideas and that aid institutions are not monolithic (Long 2001; Escobar 1995, Fairclough 2002). Rather, both are active catalysts of change in

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<sup>9</sup> Usually, the DFID collaborates with recipient governments through Ingo's like Action Aid, Christian Aid, Oxfam, Save the Children Foundation (SCOFF), Skillshare, Water Aid, and Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO). A management agency coordinates with these seven INGOs for DFID India. Infrastructure Professional Enterprise (IPE) provides technical and management support to the seven INGOs for capacity building, financial co-ordination, and other activities.

policy ideas within the overlapping and intersecting structures of aid organizations and beyond the recipient countries (Mosse 2005b).

The “social life of things” was a conceit employed by Appadurai (1995:3) to illuminate the ways in which people find value in commodities and the exchange of these things, and how that in turn imparts value to social relations. Appadurai perceives “the economy as a particular social form” that “consists not only in exchanging values but in the exchange of values” (1995:4). The centrality of circulation of values embedded in commodities is akin to the circulation and exchange of ideas between human beings. This is based on the premise that ideas are embedded in the human mind and the internalization, articulation, imitation, implementation and exchange of ideas goes hand-in-hand with the movements and actions of people, which exemplifies the social life of ideas. As one of the key informants said, “the policy themes and ideas exist in the air they are all over.” By this, she meant people as individuals or cluster clusters of likeminded people exchange, transfers, adopt, internalize, and reproduce the ideas they acquire and internalize from their social, cultural, and political milieu.

Additionally, the “solidarity economie” approach will be used to understand the intentions behind the undocumented activities, which feeds into the concept of social development entrepreneurship. The theoretical framework of social entrepreneurship underlines the phenomenon of the policy practices of aid professionals aimed towards the social development of the poor or public welfare, in general out of solidarity, with no profit intended.

### 1.2.3 Policy ideas as social practice

During my fieldwork, I encountered anecdotal accounts of development professionals about acts that culminated in bringing about considerable change in the life of the poor through their interventions in policy and project. The changes achieved were from the perspective of social responsibility of the development industry and its various institutions. For example, percolation of funds and the diverting of aid resources towards the “deserving” communities rather than those who are deemed needy as per the institutional understanding of politically correct<sup>10</sup>. These acts were practical in nature. As they often stated, it was "what has to be done" or "what is the right thing to do" and was decided informally by these social policy entrepreneurs rather than what they should have been doing within the confines of formal institutional schemata or according to the book. This was achieved diplomatically and tacitly while going against the flow of contemporary political assumptions within DFID's formal institutional understanding of its dominant internal policies. Consequently, their acts were neither accounted for or documented in the planned formal order of the DFID chronicles, which Scott (1998:311) calls a “missing link” between the formal order and informal processes in the administrative systems. Kulothoungan (2009:1) applies Popper's "situational analysis framework" to study social enterprises. Karl Popper (1962:200) maintained that "the most important element in explaining the social phenomenon is to understand the logic by which individuals tend to act in ways that they believe are adequate, or appropriate, in the situation as they conceive it" (Kulothoungan 2009:3). Hence, the phenomenon of social entrepreneurship, looked from the lens of the Popperian argument of situational logic framework (1962:200), gives us “an opportunity to look at social entrepreneurship concept as

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<sup>10</sup> Here ‘political right’ implies the ‘political stand’ on certain situations that would serve the economic – political interests of ruling party or institutions and related stakeholders rather than what is commonsensical ‘right’.

the interplay of institutional frameworks acted upon by individual agency, in specific situational context” (Kulothoungan 2009:3).

In the conceptualization above, the Bourdieun logic of social practice (1995:56) as an expression of internalized habitus can complement the Popperian logic that could help us enhance our understanding of the rationale and intentions of social or social policy entrepreneurs behind the undocumented strategic policy practices (Kulathoungan 2009:3). Whereas, habitus consists of the general dispositions, inclinations, attitudes and values of any particular social arena that is embodied by the inhabitants (Bourdieu 1995:56). The institutional habitus constitute a complex amalgam of agency and structure, which could be understood as the impact of a cultural group or social class on an individual’s behaviour as it is mediated through an organization (Reay et al 2001:1). However, on the calculated responses of habitus, Bourdieu (1990:53) contemplates:

It is never ruled out that the responses of the habitus may be accompanied by a strategic calculation tending to perform in a conscious mode of operation that the habitus performs quite differently, namely an estimation of chances presupposing transformation of the past effect into an expected objective. But these responses are first defined, without any calculation, in relation to objective potentialities, immediately inscribed in the present, things to do or not to do, things to say or not to say, in relation to a probable, upcoming future.

Moreover, the crucial role familial and institutional habituses play during the practices is characterized by the interplay of interests, biases, and values translated by socio-culturally situated aidmen and aidwomen into international policy regimes. Bourdieu (1990:52) highlights the contradiction between the theory of practices as practice and intellectualist idealism, he says that:



Contrary to positivist materialism the objects of knowledge or individual convictions are constructed, not passively recorded and the principle of this construction is the system of structured, structuring dispositions, that is the habitus, which is constituted in practice that is oriented towards practical functions and not the objective.

Bourdieu (1990:52) argues that the social world cannot be seen as a representation and practices are not the mere acting-out of roles or the implementation of plans. Hence we can conclude that the motivating force or intentions behind the policy practices by social policy entrepreneurs could be tracked back to the calculated responses of familial as well as the institutional habituses against what they intend to achieve through those practices.

### **1.3 The *economie solidaire* of social entrepreneurs**

The present study underlines the paradigm shift in the theoretical-analytical approach towards poverty analysis that started from Europe, later travelled to the World Bank, and further seen as the new way of looking at the root causes of global poverty, as is discussed further in Chapter 4. Simultaneously, it hints towards the phenomenon of the social entrepreneurship that goes beyond the notions of altruism, patron-client relationship, or humanitarian understandings of meta-official sustained endeavours. While the altruistic actions by development practitioners directed to bring about positive changes in the lives of the poor at the grassroots level are occasional or one-off, the social policy entrepreneurs intermittently conduct their activities tacitly, devising novel ways of policy intervention.

I will apply the CDA, with its various tools like normalization, generalizations, and legitimation, to make sense of the organization, categorization, and modification of the object

and subjects of the social exclusion framework by certain actors from their privileged social political position at particular junctures of time and space. Additionally, the actor-oriented approach is applied to help in understanding the actualization of the policy through the informal practices. The analytical lens of social entrepreneurship concept was used due to the lack of clear ideas about the intention behind these informal policy practices that did not fit into the formal administrative executive model of working of aid bureaucracy. In order to highlight the intentions inherent in the policy practices that are not official in nature, they could not fit into the conventional understanding of altruism or patronage. The relevance of the concept of social development entrepreneurs is based on the proposition that it involves professionals from state bureaucracy or development institutions that were engaged in social entrepreneurship (Hulgard 2010:297). The concept of social entrepreneurship derives its theoretical strength from broader human economy approach (Hart 2010).

I maintain that an actor-oriented approach will not only facilitate my exploring the social life of policy ideas and development practitioners as active agents within development industry but it will also help me in studying the social entrepreneur activities of development professionals. On one hand, *economie solidarie* or the social entrepreneurship approach highlights the rationale behind the action or policy practices of development practitioners and social development entrepreneurs. On the other hand, it helps us comprehend the reasons that make them rise above the officialdom or the iron cage of bureaucracy (Weber 2005:124-25), as discussed in Chapter 2. Here, the term social entrepreneur is used synonymously for development practitioners and professionals aid bureaucrats who attempt to shape and influence policies and projects throughout their careers in the aid industry without any expectation of monetary benefit or equivalent economic value. The basic concept of entrepreneurship essentially involves an enterprise or investment of economic value with an

inherent expectation of economic reciprocity. However, similar endeavours that involve planning and investment of time, money, talent, and resources in hand with no profit intended and the desire to achieve social development out of solidarity is what makes it social entrepreneurship or social development entrepreneurship, a concept rooted in Latin America and evolved in Francophone countries and USA (Peattie 1987; Hulgard 2010:294, Hart 2010:15). Acts of social entrepreneurship have been in practice long before their conceptualization on the individual level. However, the essence of this thesis lies in highlighting these practices in the aid industry as a sustained and collective phenomenon throughout the life-long careers of development agents and social policy entrepreneurs as is reflected in the fieldwork findings.

#### **1.4 Overview of the thesis**

This chapter served to introduce the thesis as a whole. Chapter 2 contains the literature review. It engages with a wide range of literature dealing with the anthropology of development in general and anthropology of policy in particular. It also discusses the relevant theoretical approaches to development practices and policymaking processes.

Chapter 3 sketches out the analytical methodological framework applied to research and fieldwork. It maps the course of the entire fieldwork and justifies the relevant research methods applied throughout the research. In reference to the non-interviews, this chapter contemplates over my exclusion as well as inclusion as a researcher from the research field. Thus, on one hand, it is about non-cooperation or reluctance on the part of some of the key aid institutions and key informants. In the context of my own fieldwork experience, this chapter discusses the evasive tendency of aid organizations towards researchers that is

directly related to the complex nature of organizations and institutional perception of self by their members. At the same time, it mirrors the contradictory interplay of the power vested in these organizations and the discourse of liberal democratic institutions working for international development woven around them.

Chapter 4 is divided into two major sections. First section maps out the life course of the concept of social exclusion. It considers how social exclusion framework was originated, conceptualized and became a part of the European social analytical project on poverty. It highlights how the state, institutional and non-institutional actors and factors shaped the concept of social exclusion respectively incorporating this framework as British domestic policy framework and later of as international aid policy theme for DFID and World Bank.

Second section of Chapter 4 gives background of the institutional and political context of social exclusion framework. It elaborates on the phenomenon of framing an aid policy. It also includes the CDA exercise on the definition of social exclusion during two different phases of its life trajectory as an analytical framework for new forms of chronic poverty. These two phases are divided by nearly two decades, the 1970s, and 1980s. This chapter, with the aid of various tools of CDA, tries to track and reason the changes made in the two representative definitions of social exclusion. Eventually, it gives a fair picture of the inevitable role played by myriad actors and factors during the production of policy and cognate practices in different context, while underlining the undercurrents of unofficial practices.

Chapter 5 describes and discusses case studies of informal or undocumented policy practices, which are conducted within aid institutions. These informal policy practices could not be

classified into categories but they involve the strategic ideological assertion, indirect counsel, briefing, implicit and explicit advocacy, and systematic utilization of agency on the part of key stakeholders and actors within the donor institutions.

Chapter 6 corroborates the main theoretical argument on mediating an approach between CDA and actor-oriented research in policy practices with further fieldwork findings. In doing so, I point to the chasm between the dominant discourse of policy-making and everyday practices of policy makers from aid institutions by highlighting the undocumented phenomenon of extra-official policy practices, hinting towards new possibilities in the development industry.

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## Chapter 2 Literature Review

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter offers an overview of literature on the anthropology of policy and engages with contemporary debates from the anthropology of development. This is done in order to formulate the research problem that involves the study of ‘undocumented policy practices and processes’ in reference to the case study of the emergence of social exclusion policy framework in the Department for International Development (DFID). This chapter aims to achieve this by couching the research problem and corresponding theoretical challenges within the broader relevant literature on the anthropological study of policy.

This chapter is divided into six sections. Following the introduction, the second section addresses the importance of anthropological study of policy in the present times. In the third section, I engage with the literature on the anthropology of development relevant to the anthropological study of policymaking. Here by anthropology of policy I mean the corpus of anthropological research which is focused on policy as a political phenomena irrespective of whether it is aid policy or not . By anthropology of development, I mean the research and studies that look at inclusive and broader expression of international development phenomena. The fourth section brings together the previous two sections by discussing and analysing the various approaches used to study development policy practices. Moving towards the discussion of methods and theory, the fifth and sixth sections are dedicated to discussions on the discursive analysis of policy and theories of policy change respectively while formulating the research problematic. The seventh section offers a brief overview of the Weberian notion of ‘rational’ bureaucracy so as to theoretically contextualize and

comparatively analyse the phenomenon of undocumented policy practices I came across during my fieldwork. This is followed by the introduction of solidarity economic framework in the eighth section. The final section concludes the chapter, summarizing the major points of the chapter.

## 2.2 The Anthropology of Policy

In the preface of their pioneering monograph on the anthropology of policy, Shore and Wright offer a clear and concise argument for the importance and relevance of the anthropological study of the policy:

“From the cradle to the grave, people are classified, shaped, and ordered according to policies, but they may have little consciousness of or control over the processes at work. The study of policy, therefore, leads straight into the issues at the heart of anthropology: norms and institutions; ideology and consciousness; knowledge and power; rhetoric and discourse; meaning and interpretation; the global and the local—to mention but a few.” (1997:4)

Nevertheless, Shore *et al.* (2011) maintain, “policies are not always confined to texts, they are productive and continually contested, and ‘they show how’ policies are embedded within particular social and cultural worlds or ‘domains of meanings’ (Shore *et al* 2011:1). They argue that the anthropological treatment of policy can open new perspectives, revealing processes of governance, power and social change that are shaping the world today (Shore and Wright 1997:10). Policies are major instruments through which governments, companies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), public agencies and international institutions classify and regulate the spaces and subjects that they seek to govern (Shore *et al* 2011:3,

Mosse 2011:12-13). Therefore, the analysis of policy processes enables us to “see the way fragments of culture and society are brought into new alignments with each other to create new social and semantic terrain” (Shore *et al* 2011:2). As it has already been mentioned this research will use the case study of social exclusion framework and its emergence in the DFID as a policy framework. On the lines of the above-mentioned perspectives, this study aims to look at the life-course of the conceptual framework of social exclusion from a local concept to an international framework of social-political analysis through the lens of undocumented policy practices. In doing so this research attempts to evaluate and examine the social – cultural and political context of this framework as well as the policy processes that shape the aid policies.

More specifically, as anthropological research of international development policies and aid policy practices, in particular at the present time now, can shed light on the global-local processes that shape new alignments of social-cultural worlds or ‘domains of meanings’ (Shore *et al* 2011:1) in the age of globalization. The aid industry or Aidland as Apthorpe (2011: ) perceives it subsumes network of aid institutions as well as networks of aid professionals, aid managers, consultants, researchers, and academics termed as epistemic communities by Mosse (2005 a : 6) . The critical analytical study of the evolution of policy ideas and its emergence within the international aid infrastructure through a critical analysis of the literature, language, networks and practices of actors involved in international development intervention can offer us new insights into the social specific contexts of the policy ideas (Mosse 2011: 9-11 ). The critical analysis of aid policies, in general, and social exclusion policies, more specifically, are particularly relevant for the study of development intervention in societies from South Asia, Africa and Latin America, where caste, status, descent, and occupation are the cause of the social exclusion (Kabeer 2000:84, de Haan



2011:20). Moreover, such studies are pertinent for understanding the dynamics of policy formation and its human dimension from actor-oriented perspective.

Another reason why anthropologists need to study policy-making is because structural inequality produced by economic instability and the inability of the state to implement policy often results into policy failure (Dani and Haan 2008:25). While this seems too logical, as Mosse (2005b) propounded we have little insight into the mechanisms behind the production of successes and failure of policy within the state and international bureaucracies; little is known about the ways in which policies influence the analysis of instability and structural inequality while producing the policy solutions . Thus it is necessary for anthropologists to turn their gaze on the processes of policy innovation and policy change within premier aid institutions in addition to examining the role of epistemic communities (Mosse 2005a:6) active within and beyond. This will help anthropologists and policy makers alike understand the potential loopholes and drawbacks in policy making that hamper a serious engagement with local politics during development delivery. In addition, this study would contribute to better development policy outcomes in the future (Mosse 2005b: 12; de Haan and Warmerdam 2012:4). This is what this study intends to do by examining the phenomenon of policy innovation, in this case, the origination of social exclusion as a conceptual-analytical framework, the local social –political aspect of its emergence . Moreover, this study attempts to look into the trajectory and processes of adaptation, advocacy, framing, and promotion of this French framework in the UK as domestic policy and as an international policy approach to tackle the poverty from South Asia, Africa, and Latin America in the DFID.

In the call for contributions for a new book series <sup>11</sup> Shore and Wright (2014:1) call for a new anthropology of policy that broadens the scope of the field. They suggest that anthropology of policy should attempt to shed light on how policies travel and elucidate how epistemic communities spread through the international agencies, think tanks, lobbyists, marketing, public relations agencies, and new categories of expertise play in shaping policy <sup>12</sup> . More importantly, they argue that the cycle of policy inception, traction, implementation, and eventual change in the aid industry should be looked upon from the lens of the above-mentioned actors, their roles, institutions, and work cultures (2014:2). It is necessary to look at the role of ministries, municipal governments and other public-sector organisations and bureaucrats that are undergoing major transformations in order to understand how they influence the policy world and policy objectives.

Therefore, on the one hand, I will draw on theories of development as a political phenomenon with embedded social and cultural underpinnings. On the other hand, I will build upon the anthropological view of policy as a product of the constellation of actors, text, discourses, and metaphor. In addition, this thesis will highlight the connection between disparate influential actors in complex power and resource relations that plays a pervasive and indirect role in shaping the local reality as well as the success stories of policies (Shore and Wright 1997:11, Li 2007:227, Mosse 2006:2-3). By unpacking aid policy in this way, a host of new opportunities emerge. These opportunities allow anthropologists to produce more nuanced accounts of the ‘aid men’ and ‘aid women’, as well as networks of professionals those are engaged in the implementation and formation of development policies. These networks of

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<sup>11</sup> (Shore and Wright 2014) Available on : <http://www.aaanet.org/sections/asap/new-anthropology-of-policy-book-series/> Accessed on : 11/05/2015

<sup>12</sup> (Shore and Wright 2014) Available on : <http://www.aaanet.org/sections/asap/new-anthropology-of-policy-book-series/> Accessed on : 11/05/2015

‘aid-people’ play crucial role of influencing the aid practices in “Aidland”<sup>13</sup> situated in the bureaucratic sites of donor as well as recipient countries (Apthorpe 2011a: 198-200; Pollard and Street 2010:3).

An overview of literature on the anthropological study of aid agencies, policy and actors shows that, in addition to the turning of the anthropological gaze towards ‘aidman’ and ‘aidwoman’ practicing development over the last quarter of a century, there have been many theoretical developments and paradigm shifts that have taken place in the anthropology of development. These changes are characterized by a gradual shift away from the study of development practices towards the study of aid policies practices, a practice that Mosse (2011:9) terms “aidnography”. In reference to the context of the failure of established theoretical propositions to make sense of development practices, Mosse (2006:2) found that instead of policy producing practice, practices produce policy. This led Mosse (2004:1) to ask some pertinent questions to the policy makers and aid managers, such as - is good policy unimplementable? What if development practice is not driven by policy? He reached the conclusion that the things, which make for ‘good policy’, are those that legitimizes and mobilises political support, in reality making it impossible to implement (2004:1).

Mosse (2005a, 2006a), who utilizes an actor-oriented approach – that is, the study the actors and their practices in development, aid and policy – stresses the necessity of theorizing the practices of development in the field. By theorizing practices, Mosse means the documentation of actions and decisions taken by actors situated at various levels according to their ideological inclinations, stakes, individual or institutional priorities and aspirations. This phenomenon seldom becomes part of development stories. Here ‘actor’ is an individual with

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<sup>13</sup> Aidland is a ‘metaphor’ employed by Raymond Apthorpe ( 2011b:198 ) for the “realm of development aid policy and practices”

“personal and shared life-worlds and who acts and decides against the backgrounds of these life-worlds” (Long and Long 1992:20). She is also called a ‘social actor’, which is not simply seen as a disembodied social category (based on class or some other criteria) or a passive recipient of intervention, but an active participant who processes information and strategizes in dealings with various local actors as well as with outside institutions and personnel (Long and Long 1992:21). It is through actions that actors help to produce or reproduce methods and techniques, resources and ways of converting norms and relationships, groups and institutions, practices and patterns of behaviour, stereotypes, symbols, words, categories, classifications, and ways of expressing themselves (Seur 1992:119). Therefore, the objective of this research project is to study “the ‘*thought work*’ and informal practices that occur within the various networks of professionals within donor agencies” such as the UK Department for International Development and non-governmental organizations (Mosse 2011:7 emphasis in original).

On this, one can say revealing the inherent practices of aid policy would inform the future of development interventions in its new context. Another important dimension of researching the phenomenon of development and aid policy practices should be the relationship between anthropology and development. The mutual theoretical-empirical reciprocity between Anthropology as a discipline that aims to understand the processes of social change and development practice as a phenomenon that aims to bring about social change in the lives of global poor (see below) makes it a pragmatic objective. A discussion on how the anthropological engagement with development and policy processes advances anthropological theory also sheds light on the complex set of policy processes. These policy processes involve norms and institutions, knowledge and power, discourse formation and political technologies (Burchell *et al* 1990:124). Simultaneously, making a critique of the

usefulness of development intervention will help policy makers and aid institution to increase their administrative efficacy and efficient service delivery. The present thesis grapples with the objectives stated in the agenda above through the case study of the evolution of the social exclusion policy framework in the DFID. Incidentally, this study seeks to explore the nature of the policy processes and practices that constitute the complexity related to the processes of policymaking (Jones 2009). Nevertheless, while wearing the lens of criticality to look at the institutional politics, politics of policymaking and interest groups this study shall be open to new perspective and findings.

Another example is the Mosse-DFID controversy (2005:9). Mosse's prolonged association with the DFID led Indo-British Rainfed Farming Project (IBRFP) as an anthropologist-consultant in India culminated in an anthropological monograph of insider's account of how the success and failures in development projects are concerted actions or paperwork presentations of development practitioners. In some corners of DFID and among his immediate colleagues, this was considered a breach of professional ethics and betrayal of their trust (Mosse 2005:9-11). This provoked heated debate on the ethical code of conduct and professional propriety of what ethical damage Mosse as an anthropologist-development practitioner did in publishing the account of this project. On the other hand, Mosse made his intention clear by saying that in no way did he mean to betray the trust of his professional counterparts and DFID as an employer. Rather, his intention was to analyse his experience in an attempt to offer insight on the policy practices in the everyday life of DFID projects in the hopes that his sharing could improve policy practices. According to his argument, this work provided opportunities for engagement and self-critical reflection to help DFID become more reflective and efficient in future development interventions (Mosse 2006:243). Though one of the key informants denied any memory of this incident in the organizational mind of DFID,

the ripples of reaction to this incident are still experienced in the corridors of DFID by new researchers like me in the form of exclusion.

Referring to the Foucauldian concept of political technology (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982:196), Shore and Wright (1997:7) observe, “The masking of the political under the cloak of neutrality is a key feature of modern power.” With this in mind, government’s unease towards the involvement of anthropologists or the reason behind the aversion to the anthropological inquiry into how policies work and could be understood from the following two perspectives. Firstly, the critical-analytical gaze of anthropological research methods gives an upper hand to a researcher in understanding what I call ‘technology of politics’ of the modern state. Secondly, the anthropologist is equipped with theoretical-empirical understandings of the social-cultural underpinnings of the ‘native ways’, the knowledge much sought by politicians and colonial rulers to understand their subjects, their culture, and society for efficient governance. Now the latent fear or awareness of these strengths of the anthropological discipline to be able to see the subtleties and politics behind the processes in the first place could be at the core of the worry in the minds of politicians and policy-making institutions about anthropologists as researchers. This reminds me of the ‘cold shoulder’ given to me by DFID and related think tanks during my fieldwork (see Chapter 3). As one of my key informants said, “the nature of DFID’s development intervention is more of a management of aid flow rather than a humanitarian intervention to eradicate global poverty”, (interview, 22/08/2014). Moreover, the aid managers have to take many decisions in the light of the priorities of their firm or corporation rather than from purely humanitarian instincts.

Therefore, in these neo-liberal times, when the voices for wider demands of rights to information, audit culture and accountability from the state are on the rise, the state and its

machinery including the individual agents, such as politicians, bureaucrats of all levels and policymakers – warrants anthropological scrutiny more than ever before. This is exactly what this dissertation seeks to offer.

## **2.3 The Anthropology of Development**

The last decade has witnessed a divergence in the agenda of the anthropology of development, in the UK. The anthropological attention towards the inconsistency between pure and applied anthropology was replaced by an inquiry into the relations between policy and knowledge production, supplemented by a critical assessment of the role of the researcher as well as development practitioner (Rossi's 2004: 557).

Up until the early 2000s, the focus of the anthropology of development was on the structural and political dimensions of the donor and recipient countries as well as recipients and their habitat (Fechter and Hindman 2011:11). The loci of anthropological exploration were the lives of aid recipients, their habitats, survival and livelihood strategies, gender relations and trajectories of their social-economic mobility and potential neo-colonial underpinnings of projects of poverty eradication (Fechter and Hindman 2011:12). The anthropological work produced during this period can be broadly divided into two categories. Firstly, there was a line of research that critiqued the move from the reality of development practices and dichotomies of indigenous vs. western knowledge and underscored the hazy processes of knowledge production by development institutions (Hobart 1993, Fairhead and Leach 1996, Gardner and Lewis 1996, Gould 2008, Mosse 2005, Crewe-Harrison 2002). Secondly, a school of thought that looked at development through the lens of Foucault and Said as a

project of cultural imperialism of Western domination over former colonies (Foucault 1980, Escobar 2001, Ferguson 1994, Mosse 2005b).

The anthropology of development today shows renewed interest in the study of development aid, policy and practices of knowledge production (Mosse 2005, 2006). To put it in the words of Pollard (cited in Mosse 2011: viii) “this paradigm shift attempts to theorise development practices rather than dovetailing the practices into existing theories.” I utilize this approach in my research analysis.

On the one hand, “development as an end product of involvement of numerous social actors belonging both to ‘target groups’ and to development institutions was considered to serve as an apt modality to be described and interpreted by Anthropology” (Sardan 2005:28). On the other hand, populist, ideological, and radical deconstructivist approaches to understanding the phenomenon of development were challenged and considered as biases that hindered the analysis of the interactions between different categories of actors in development as well as the intricacies of development phenomenon (Grille and Stirrat 1997:21, Rossi 2004:557, Lewis and Mosse 2006:3).

In their 2000 study, Gardner and Lewis (2000:16) challenged the common representation of development practices as monolithic and static (e.g. Escobar 2001, Ferguson 1994) by showing that the policy agendas and interventions of development organizations are influenced by various interest groups within and outside the development organizations. This finding suggested that the work of development organization could have a positive impact on the day-to-day lives of vulnerable sections of society in fragile states (Magrath 2010:1-2). Moreover, it underscores the pertinent need on the part of students of development to



understand that “development knowledge is not one single set of ideas or assumptions, while it may function hegemonically, it is also created and recreated by multiple agents who often have very different understandings of their work” (Grillo and Stirrat 1997:21).

The necessity of a balanced social scientific view of development was felt from academic quarters in the wake of the vehement criticism directed towards the global development intervention as North-South domination (Escobar 2001:15-26), or as a disguised attempt of neo-colonization (Hobart 1993). This critical perspective that applied the Foucauldian lens of deconstructivism in its radical form was critiqued theoretically and empirically as a Manichean view with monolithic notions of global dominance, resistance and hegemony by Grillo and Stirrat (1997), Gardner and Lewis (2000), Mosse (2004), Crewe and Harrison (1998) in their respective studies.

Gardner and Lewis (2000) critiqued the monolithic presentation of international development in their case study of DFID’s 1997 White paper on development. This case study concludes that changes do take place in the agendas of development organizations that are the results of changes both within development organisations in personnel and in the balance of power between interest groups from DFID and civil society (2000). Refuting the rigid Manichean ideography of development intervention, Li proposes that the view of dominant donor and submissive recipient is a flawed perception as beneficiaries of development are not submissive but rather employ many ways of using, manipulating or negotiating with the actors within government machinery<sup>14</sup> and development organizations to safeguard their interests at local levels (Li 2007:228). Similarly, Magrath (2010:4) argues against the phenomenon of development, as it is understood from a Foucauldian lens of governmentality

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<sup>14</sup> Here by government machinery I mean the administrative and bureaucratic hierarchies.

(1991:7)<sup>15</sup> and emphasizes that development intervention does make a difference in countries where the government machinery of service delivery is inadequate and external aid is needed to help the poor.

On the disciplinary and theoretical level, it was argued that the anthropological study of development, policy, and practices holds considerable potential for anthropologists who are intrigued by the workings of discourses, knowledge, power (discussed below), constructions, and the role culture plays in the interstices of development intervention practices and aid policies. Concurrently, the anthropological critique of development on global and local levels *vis-a-vis* organizational levels and individual levels was considered pertinent from the point of view of implementation (Mosse 2011, Gardner and Lewis, 1996, 2, Geertz 1973, Wright 1994, Stirrat 1997).

Furthermore, the ethnographic study of development claimed to challenge anthropologists to rethink their own assumptions and methods that defined anthropology as a discipline (Mosse 2005, 2011, Lewis and Mosse 2006, Venkateshan and Yarrow 2012). However, there was a much wider post-colonial, and the global-political context behind the relative social scientific claim for a better and critical understanding of the processes of development practices. Specifically, disappointment in the wake of many international failures in delivering the loudly proclaimed time-bound results of global poverty eradication (Gould 2008, Rist 1990, Sumner and Tiwari 2010:9).

This uneasy relationship between anthropology and development had a strong undercurrent of disenchantment about the project of modernity<sup>16</sup> and ‘mission’ development in general.

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<sup>15</sup> Governmentality is a neologism coined by Foucault (Burchell et al 1991) joining ‘governor’ and ‘mentality’, by this term he meant the ‘conduct of conduct’ (Li 2007:275).

This disenchantment arose due to series of failures in fulfilling its promised goals and objectives of regional and global poverty eradication (Gardner and Lewis 1996, Gough and Wood 2004). The partially attained Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is one of the latest prominent examples of such (Gough and Wood 2004, Sumner and Tiwari 2010). That is why the fifty-year old stable framework of development has been exposed to unparalleled critical scrutiny in the twenty-first century (Mosse 2005a:1). What Lewis and Mosse call an “impasse” was identified in development studies in the 1990s that persisted over the next decade, which gave rise to “post-development” perspectives (Lewis and Mosse 2006:1). This could be the main reason behind the recent U-turn of the anthropological gaze towards the movers and shakers of the international development enterprise in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Rist 2007, Gould, 2008).

How the ambiguous and problematic practices and concepts within the world of development were challenged and critiqued could be a topic of an independent research. However, this realization on the part of development practitioners and international development organisations is later reflected in the paradigm shift within ‘development institutions’. The visible changes in the theoretical-empirical approaches in policies were directed towards its ‘development practices’ in developing countries during the late 1990s and early 2000s. This paradigm shift entailed a move to evidence-based knowledge and knowledge-based policy that marks the prominence of policy making in the international development industry (Trivedy ppt 2012<sup>17</sup>). Mosse and Lewis call it the “new architecture of aid that refers to the focus of aid on policy reform rather than conventional investment projects” (2005:3).

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<sup>16</sup> This term is employed here in reference to theory of ‘modernization’ that perceives ‘development in terms of a progressive movement towards technologically complex and integrated forms of “modern” society ( Long and Long , 1992, cited in Gardner and Lewis 1996:12)

<sup>17</sup> Available on : <http://www.slideshare.net/idsuk/sussex-development-lecture-on-civil-society-by-roy-trivedy-head-of-civil-society-dfid> , Accessed on 26/11/2015

## **2.4 The nuances of ethnographic study of Aid and Policy**

This section offers a brief discussion on various nuances of an ethnographic study of policy and practices through social sciences. The prominence of ethnographic studies of development practices and discursive analysis of aid policies embedded in text and literature underline the significance of methodologies discussed in the following section. Then, the following subsection discusses the relevance of discursive analysis of aid policy literature, text, and documents.

### **2.4.1 Ethnography of Aid and Policy: Norms and institutions; knowledge, power and discourse**

Ethnography, as a methodological approach, in the most general sense, can be defined as the study of a community or ethnic group at close quarters, resulting in a text (usually known as a monograph) (Gardner and Lewis, 1996: xiv). Lewis and Mosse (2006:1) did their ethnography of aid and agencies on the premise that “ethnographic research can provide policymakers and aid managers with valuable reflective insights into the operations and effectiveness of international development as a complex set of local, national, and cross-cultural social interactions”.

Lewis and Mosse (2006:15) argue that ethnography is an indispensable tool for understanding the dynamic relationship and complex ways in which a community and individuals relate to ideas applied and resources employed by international development agencies so as to make any international development agency successful. It follows that ethnography of aid policy

should study the roles of various actors from the policy level to the grassroots level and the political-historical context of theorization, policy formation, categorization, and development intervention in operation, i.e. development practices. However, to date, the majority of this research has focused on the senior bureaucrats and development professional and their experiences of political constraint while practicing policy.

There are a number of ethnographic approaches used to study the aid, aid-policy, and policy making in international development. First, there are those that are concerned with the political economy of knowledge, its relationship to institutional power and the maintenance of organizational legitimacy focusing on the quality and accountability of expert knowledge (Mosse 2011:8). Secondly, there are those that ethnographically focus on the transmission mechanisms of expert knowledge covering a wide range of professionals in transnational agencies, firms, and NGO (Mosse 2011:9). Another ethnographic approach shifts attention away from the rationality of power-disciplining or governmentalizing towards a more ambiguous processes of actual knowledge production, to actor worlds and the social life of ideas highlighting the importance of actor relationships in the shaping and the importance of policy ideas in mediating professional relationships (Mosse 2011:10; Fechter and Hindman 2011:2).

Mosse (2011:11) underscores that decision-making knowledge, including, apparently hard economic facts and statistics, are the outcome of complex relationships including negotiations over status, access, disciplinary points of view, team leadership struggles, conflict management or compliance with client frameworks defining what counts as knowledge (Apthorpe 1996:17). Another aspect of an actor-focused approach to expertise is one that

focuses on the importance of policy ideas themselves and their artefacts: papers, reports, diagrams, and so forth. (Harper 1998:5; Mosse 2011:11).

Shore and Wright (1997: 21) argue that treating the policy as a new anthropological field means not only working on various sites but also scrutinizing new kinds of material (i.e. policy documents and its political-historical context). They challenge the conventional notion of policy as a top-down, linear and rational process and a field of study primarily for policy analysts. On the contrary, they maintain that ‘if anthropology has salience for understanding the policies as political and administrative processes, policies are inherently and unequivocally anthropological phenomena and hence can be read by anthropologists in numerous ways’ (1997:12). They argue that an anthropological understanding of policy should entail the analysis of the contradictory nature and effects of policy, including the complex ways in which people engage with policy; for instance, the meanings that policy holds for local, regional, national and internationally-based actors could be different and disparate (1997:11).

For Shore and Wright, the policy itself becomes a site of contestation and negotiation, carrying forward the baggage of contemporary political agendas and vested interests of a range of actors, sometimes contradicting and other times overlapping (Shore and Wright 1997:15,127). Therefore, the inherent complexity of the policy processes and the multiplicity of the sites of policy hints towards the inadequacy of participant observation as a research method in one face-to-face setting (Shore and Wright 1997:11). Shore and Wright recommend that the

“key is to grasp the interactions (and disjunctions) between different sites or levels in policy process that would entail ‘studying through’ and eventually tracing the policy

connections between different organizational and everyday worlds, wherein actors in different sites are oblivious to each other individual moral and ideological universes” (Shore and Wright 1997:11).

Additionally, the potential altruistic motives of development practitioners underlying their professional decisions, policy advocacy, personal initiatives influencing the political decisions while in their office or field have been questioned (Fechter and Hindman 2011:22). For example, Li (2000:280) documents the use of both the international development intervention and local-national clout to benefit oneself by local dominant actors. Nevertheless, we cannot ignore the necessity for international development or state intervention to regulate available resources to benefit the marginalized. Whereas, the dominant social scientific epistemology stresses on the objective and neutral comprehension of social-political phenomenon and processes, there is a need for a new approach or analytical framework that would help us to comprehend the sustained activities of non-profit nature within the broader political economy of development aid those are based on solidarity rather than on-off altruistic efforts.

Pollard and Street (2010:1) argue that looking at development practices from established theoretical perspectives is inadequate to give an actual picture of development phenomenon. Alternatively, they suggest that theories should be based on practices as they are performed in the field or day-to-day lives of development practitioners. Magrath (2010:3) proposes that the study of development practice can highlight the ‘blind spots’ of anthropological knowledge production. She argues that anthropologists, often steeped in Euro-American, Foucauldian theories of governmentality have been blinded to those spaces where the techniques of governmentality are desperately needed as the basis for extending basic services to a rural

citizen majority, and where they are actively strived for by government, development actors and publics alike.

Crewe and Harrison (2002:27) observe that “development institutions (read networks of experts) operate with assumptions, values, and concepts, which are shaped in conjunction with historical and material forces... they are conglomerations of individuals and groups with varying interests, histories, and capacities for the agency; they diverge in their particular reinterpretation of ideologies.” This is congruent with what Mosse (2004: xii) points out, that “aid agencies that involve practices of ‘productions of success’ rather than results at the grass-roots are interpretive communities”. He reiterates that “development programmes involve consensus building around authoritative interpretations; requiring networks of expert-supporter that creates knowledge based ‘epistemic communities’” (Hass 1990 and Watts 2001 cited in Mosse 2004:248).

Mosse (2005a:38) encourages us to look at the social origin of policy ideas attracting our attention toward the epistemic communities, policy networks, the managed agenda-setting consultations and consultant experts and consensus formation involved in manufacturing transferable expert knowledge. He proposes that by looking at the power and professional life of experts across disciplinary, institutional and global/local divides, within and between epistemic and advocacy networks, research should examine how universal models are produced in socially specific contexts ( Mosse 2005b:15). Mosse maintains that ‘international policy regimes do not simply arrive, but are produced by intermediary actors, and middle managers, bureaucrats, clinicians, technicians, NGO staff, health workers or engineers’, whom he calls frontline workers (2005b:23). These are the ‘episteme communities’, which translate the abstract global policies into their own ambitions, interests, and values (Mosse



2005b:23; Mosse and Lewis 2006). That is why Apthorpe (2011a:204) ruminates, “a good first question to ask in the particular case is precisely what that practitioner practices”.

The complex ways in which epistemic community and individual development professionals relate to ideas applied and resources while working within an institutions to make a project success or failure could be effectively studied by ethnographic means (Lewis and Mosse 2006:4). Therefore, the ethnography of aid policy should focus on the roles of various actors from the policy level to the grassroots level in the political-historical context of theorization, policy formation, categorization, and development intervention in operation (i.e. development practices).

Moreover, Long (1992:9, 21) advocates the actor-oriented perspective equipped with key insights from wider anthropology in providing a valuable entry point and a way of seeing appropriate to specific development projects. This perspective allows us to view development projects themselves as communities. Combined with participant observation and anthropology’s holistic approach to social and economic life, it reveals the links between the micro- and the macro perspectives and hidden, complex realities that have a bearing on project-based work (Gardner and Lewis, 2000:18) often missed by other practitioners. Lewis and Mosse (2006:10-11) argue that an actor-oriented approach makes a useful entry point to the issue, “highlighting the ways in which social actors operate as active agents within development establishments, building social, political, and economic roles rather than following the normative scripts”.

One of the challenges of identifying the research problem was to define it in a way that would make sense. I defined the anecdotal incidences from the professional lives of development professionals as undocumented policy practice. The very nature of these practices made it

somewhat not openly acknowledged or recorded as a part of the everyday bureaucratic documentation. Despite its significant role in policy change and development projects, these practices remained neglected or probably taken for granted due to their mundane appearance and regular nature. These are they practices conducted by bureaucrats out self-motivation hence not part of official-formal proceedings. There were two ways to define them either to look for what has been documented or to search for another characteristic of those practises and look for its opposite phenomenon. In terms of the later solution, I found that the undocumented policy practises are informal or unofficial in nature and another way round. Now the question is how to make sense of this unofficial phenomenon? Who is the source or conductor of these processes? Why are they conducting these practices? What was their intention and what was the rationale behind these practices? Do these practices fit into the rational choice theory of decision making within the rational model of the modern bureaucracy? I have evaluated the potential theoretical approaches and frameworks that would help me in making sense of this phenomenon, in the light of these questions. As such, I employ this method in my study. This will facilitate examining the ways devised by development agents to intervene in the policymaking and development practices. This will not only entail the identification of the various strategies but also help to see what effect these strategies or employed by which actors within the bureaucratic setting of aid institution. The use of actor-oriented approach shall enable this study to focus and differentiate between the ideological dispositions as well as political inclinations of the range of actors and networks of development professionals. I will concentrate on the actors through their practices and narratives while examining the phenomenon of undocumented policy practices and self-motivated policy interventions.

Following the above-mentioned research pattern has helped this project in observing the policy practices rather than theorizing them, eventually offering a clear picture and insights into the playing out of the aid policy (Lewis and Mosse 2006: 5, 15, 21, Mosse 2011: viii, Pollard and Street 2010:1). The aid policy as it is shaped by varying factors and networks actors on various levels of architecture of aid and broader geo-political context of the policy. By term ‘architecture of aid,’ I am referring to “the set of rules and institutions that govern the aid flow to developing countries and various layers and interstices through the entire institutional body of development phenomenon, including networks of professionals working within and without” (World Bank paper 2008:27-28). From a broad perspective, my research will be a “studying through” the phenomenon called development and not “studying down” or “studying up” (Nader 1972:284, Wright 1997:11). Studying through helps, we understand the “ways in which power creates webs and relations between actors, institutions, and discourses across time and space” (Shore and Wright 1997:11) (emphasis added).

In addition, we can say that actor-oriented ethnographic approach informed by what Lewis and Mosse (2006:5) call “methodological deconstructivism” could be used to get insight into the anatomy of the policy. As it highlights the ways in which beneficiaries and social actors and actors within aid agencies operate, negotiate, reinterpret, and contest the policy and its meanings within development establishments. (Mosse 2005:27). The knowledge management within development industry is characterized by making and re-making of the aid policy. This making and re-making are subject to the overarching policy paradigms as well as the dominant paradigms of social-economical analysis. In terms of this study, the point of discernment about the production of the new policy would be the exploration of the origin of policy framework i.e. social exclusion. As a part of discursive deconstruction exercise, I will look at the origin of this policy framework while exploring its journey and trajectory as an

analytical concept. I studied the processes of framing and re-framing of the policy themes in reference to the role of social policy entrepreneurs in terms of reinterpretation, negotiation, contestation, and adaptation of various variables into the processes on reframing of social exclusion framework to serve the pressing imperatives of the DFID during the emergence of this policy theme.

The Foucauldian perspective seeks to understand how various institutions exert their power on groups and individuals, and how the latter affirm their own identity and resist the effects of power (Foucault 1980:69-71) through the architecture of aid. That would be to examine the practices of actors in the light of their level in a bureaucratic hierarchy. The orthodoxy within aid institutions like DFID has been challenged time to time due to changing configuration actors with their political and disciplinary biases (Eyben 2000, 2003). Moreover, the changes within the institutional structures and transitions in autonomy as well as change in the paradigms of development interventions has been highlighted as some of the significant factors that shaped the changing work culture of DFID as an aid institution (Gardner and Lewis 2000). On the one hand, while the claims of development and empowerment has been challenged by studies like Hobbart (1993) Crewe and Harrison's (1998), on the other hand, studies like Mosse (2005b) and Stirrat (2000) have scrutinized the 'concerted and creative paper-practices' of aid bureaucrats manufacturing success and failures. However, this mixed record of research on the realistic performances of development in general and the DFID in particular from past decades prompts us to look at the potential new features of the institutional and development cultures in the present development industry. What makes the DFID and its work culture a significant 'development bureaucratic setting' to focus anthropological 'gaze' on is its international and leading position as one of the prominent global donor institutions that is the UK Aid. Besides its colonial context, DFID as new age British aid institution with its long history of development

intervention has enriched in its learning and experience of development policies and projects scattered all over global South. Characterized by its multilateral political and economic ties with developing countries as well as International financial institutions like World Bank, International Monetary Fund and UN, UK aid and its leading institution DFID makes an ideal setting to study aid bureaucracy, aid policy and management of global development interventions. The present study is interested in understanding how the bureaucratic standing of DFID hampered or facilitated the implementation of social exclusion policy. Therefore, the present study utilizes the actor-oriented approach, which equips us with key insights from wider anthropology. In addition, this approach provides a valuable entry point and a way of seeing appropriate to specific development interventions, along with the emerging power-relations and the roles the brokers, developers, aid managers and development practitioners play in the entire process (Mosse 2011:1-2).

Nevertheless it sheds light on the (undocumented development practices of) development entrepreneurs who are committed to making difference at the grass-roots out of solidarity towards the poor (Laville 2010:112, Fechter and Hindman 2011:28).

## **2.5 Anthropological theories on Policy change**

This section gives an overview of key anthropological studies and relevant theoretical approaches employed hitherto from the point of view of the research in hand. I take into consideration the studied opinion of pioneer and experts on policy studies from the UK such as Apthorpe, Shore, and Wright, as well as one of the earliest studies on aid policy processes by Sutton (1999) setting a broader canvas for the present study. In addition, I included the

brief overview of ‘six theories about how policies change’ by Stachowiack’s (2009)<sup>18</sup> latest research article.

### **2.5.1 Theories of Policy change**

In 1980s the British Association for Social Anthropology in Policy and Practice (BASAPP) (later renamed as Anthropology for Action) organized and initiated the anthropological work on the inner workings of organizations as a governing institution in modern times. However, there were other sporadic studies conducted in the 1970s and 1980s, like those by Titmus (1974), Weiss (1986) and Apthorpe (1986).

In 1994, Anthropology for Action organized a session on ‘Policy, Morality and the Art of Government’ in the Oslo conference organized by European Association of Social Anthropologists (Shore and Wright 1997:4). To this day, Apthorpe is considered one of the pioneering anthropologists to cast his anthropological gaze on development or aid policy as a power-wielding discourse on its subject of governance. As a special note on Apthorpe in this volume, Kuper (1983:190-1), writes that “Apthorpe is one exception who has kept his ‘anthropological eyes’ focused on the way the discourse and practices of the development projects in which he has been involved help to reproduce relations of power in the modern world system.” Kuper’s (1983:190-1) remark that “like most applied anthropologists, Apthorpe has had difficulty in maintaining an anthropological audience speaks volumes about the kind of disciplinary abstinence towards the heavy political laden topic of policy. That was not considered suitable for research.” However, the publications like Shore and

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<sup>18</sup> Available on : <http://www.innonet.org/resources/node/435> , Accessed on 13/10/2015

Wright (1997) not only mainstreamed the “criticality of the policy issues” as state mechanisms to govern the masses but also problematized the ‘nature of development or aid policies’ to its implicit ends of global governance (Shore and Wright 1997; Apthorpe 1986).

This was followed by publications and work on hitherto un-researched issues of policy emergence and policy change that has long troubled the researchers. Interestingly enough, aid organizations and think tanks took this emergent issue on board quite quickly. Rebecca Sutton’s (1999) working paper titled *The policy processes: An overview*, published by the Overseas Development Institution (ODI) and funded by World Bank is one such example. This working paper summarizes key ideas in the conceptual framework of policy from five disciplines – Political science, Sociology, Anthropology, International Relations, and Management – in the context of a dominant linear model of policy evolution. She highlights the crosscutting themes of policy formation or evolution that emerge from these various disciplines. Those themes are the dichotomy between policy-making and implementation, the management of change, and the role of interest groups in the policy process, ownership of the policy process, the urge to simplify and the narrowing of the policy alternatives (Sutton 1999:22).

Drawing on the literature from all the disciplines Sutton (1999) extracts twenty-one points or circumstances that facilitate policy innovation. To summarize Sutton’s findings in her own words, “the policy, but springs out of a chaos of purposes and accidents, and not a matter of the rational implementation of well-planned strategies” (Sutton 1999:32). Of the many crosscutting themes derived by Sutton (1999), I could especially identify my fieldwork experiences with the theme of the dichotomy between policy-making and implementation and the role of interest groups in the policy process. Although this and the study by Stachowiack

(2009) below does not shed light on the inherent nature of ‘interest groups it did conform to my observations on development practitioners who could be called social development entrepreneurs.

Another relevant work on the theories of policy formation or change is Stachowiack’s ‘*Pathways for Change: 6 Theories about How Policy Change happens*’ (2009). Stachowiack’s research article sheds light on the how the policy changes occur and how policy ideas can be effectively advocated or channelled. Stachowiack (2009:1), who is a director of Evaluation at Organizational Research Services (ORS), in Seattle, Washington and has authored *A Guide to Measuring Policy and Advocacy*, underlines the inadequacy behind the general assumption of a linear progression of policy ideas. She argue that the dominant perception about the policy process from a high school civics class is not more than “an idea becomes a bill, elected officials vote on it, and if all goes well the bill gets transformed into law”, (2009:1). Stachowiack states that the dominant discourse of policymaking seldom helps us in understanding why certain policies move forward while others not and how the policy change are successfully promoted. In her exclusive brief, she summarizes six theories of policy change based on six key researchers on policy innovation and policy advocacy. These theories are broadly divided into two categories: the global theories and theories about advocacy strategies or tactics. Global theories subsume the *Large Leaps or Punctuated Equilibrium theory* (Baumgartner & Jones 1993), *Coalition theory* (Sabatier Jenkins-Smith 1999), and *Policy Windows theory* (Kendon 1995). The theories about advocacy strategies or tactics include *messaging and framework theory* (Tversky & Kahneman 1981), *power politics theory* (C.Wright Mills, Domhoff 1990) and *grassroots theory* (Alinsky, Biklen 1983). As is evident, these six theories are based on studies by



American social scientists even though there are other collective or individual studies published by European social scientists.

From Stachowiack's above-mentioned work (2009:2), the 'policy Windows theory', 'messaging and framework theory' and 'power politics theory' attracted my attention as my findings towards the initial stages of the social exclusion policy framework launching and the traction of this policy framework in DFID resembles these theories. Here is more information on these three theories.

First of these theories, i.e. the policy window theory of change constitutes four stages: problem defining, policy development, organizational capacity, and influencing the political climate. While framing, research and organizing fall under problem definition, the role of think tanks, identification of policy windows and networking or coalition building happens during the rest of the stages (Stachowiack 2009:9).

The second one that is the messaging and framework theory of change entails development and dissemination of messages to target audiences so as to achieve a shift in social norms likely to bring about changes in attitudes, reaching an agreement over certain issues or solutions or increasing prioritization of issues or solutions. This theory strengthens the support system by changing the behaviour among target audiences who could be public as well as key actors or policymakers from the institutions. (Stachowiack 2009:10)

The third theory of policy change i.e. power politics theory underlines the development of relationships with decision-makers and influential actors who can influence the policy issue. This is to be achieved through communication and coordination with key decision-makers

and key actors when policy opportunities emerge. Doing this strengthens the alliances between policymakers, helps bring a shift in social norms, and formation of political will to bring about changes in social and physical conditions of recipients.

The abovementioned theories of policy practices resulting in policy changes and innovation provided theoretical grounds for the practices that resemble my fieldwork and would help support some of my observations. The voluntary actions of development practitioners, civil servants, and bureaucrats situated within various levels of aid bureaucracy or aid industry were private but non-profit in nature. While further reading on this I came across the classical writings of Max Weber on the Western bureaucracies and the rational choice behaviour of bureaucrats in them. The following section will deliberate on this topic and its relevance to the topic at hand.

### **2.5.2 Weberian idea of bureaucracy**

Weber identified a rational-legal authority in bureaucracies that sought legitimacy from a legal order and the laws enacted within it. The Weberian definition of modern bureaucratic authority hinges on three modes of analysis: the principle of fixed jurisdictional areas usually regulated by laws or administration regulations; regular activities in the form of distributed official duties; and methodical provision made for the regular and continuous fulfilment of these duties that entails execution of the corresponding rights (Gerth and Mill 1958:196). This is contrasted with traditional forms of authority, which arose from phenomena like kinship. Weber maintained that rationalization describes a transition in society, wherein

traditional motivators of behaviour, such as values, beliefs, and emotions are replaced with rational calculations (Gerth and Mill 1958:56). Weber termed the increasing rationalization in Western societies an “iron cage” (Weber translated by Parsons 2001:18) that traps individuals in systems based solely on efficiency, rational calculation, and control.<sup>19</sup>

However, my finding hints towards individuals of ‘social development entrepreneur’ type in aid bureaucracy more aware about the fine distinction between the mere rationale of rational behaviour as a civil servant and the rationale behind the solidarity or accountability towards the global poor. Hence, rather than getting trapped in the “iron cage” of institutional rationalization that traps individuals in systems based purely on efficiency, rational calculation and control, my informants freed themselves by coming up with a broader and wider form of rationalization that prioritises human solidarity’ along with their accountability towards enhancing the efficacy of their work-places or institutions. The Weberian analysis of rationalized behaviour of bureaucrats springs from the highly rationalized bureaucratic cultures. This rational behavioural model of bureaucrats within modern bureaucracy can be juxtaposed with the selfless behaviour of development professionals who are motivated by public welfare rather than their own interest, which is the pertinent aspect of rational behaviour theory. This juxtaposition can reveal a new dimension of official behaviour that forms the basis of the new category of official practices of extra-official nature. Consequently, offering or conforming a novel perspective that would strengthen a phenomenon that differs from the conventional understanding of rational bureaucratic behaviour. However, the potential justification behind this moral commitment raises questions about their intentions. I shall further discuss this in next section while contextualizing it with ‘social entrepreneurship’ concept and solidarity economy framework.

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<sup>19</sup> Available on :<http://academic.udayton.edu/RichardGhere/POL%20307/weber.htm>  
Accessed on 20/05/2014

### 2.5.3 Theoretical Bases of Solidarity Economy Approach

In this section, the relevance of an emergent theoretical framework called solidarity economy shall be discussed, which will help shed light on the informal ‘policy practices’ of civil servants, bureaucrats and development practitioners within and outside the premises of aid institutions. An engagement with the ‘solidarity economy’ framework helps in understanding the nature of moral obligation or compulsion the development practitioners feel about their informal intervention in policymaking or actualizing the policy.

The practices that shape the policies and policy outcomes are often referred to, but seldom elaborated in the studies on the policy process and policy change. These practices sometimes looked through the lens of ideological inclinations, disciplinary leanings, and other times through the altruistic and patronizing angles (Porter et al 1991, Fetcher and Hindman 2011). These practices are conducted on individual levels or by networks of like-minded policy practitioners and development professionals. However, it seems logical to ask what is the compelling force or moral imperative behind these informal actions within formal structures? I believe that the ‘solidarity economy’ concept as a theoretical framework can help us answer that question.

Solidarity economy is a conceptual framework that puts forward the idea of an economy built on solidarity. Scholars like as Keith Hart, Jean-Louis Laville, and Cattani have termed it as the Human Economy (Hart et al 2010). ‘The idea of an economy built on solidarity is well entrenched in Brazil and in France as *economie solidaire*, is gaining support in Anglophone countries as well as solidarity economy’ (Hart et al 2010:15). The conceptualizers of Human Economy build on the premise of the integration of ‘moral politics’ (i.e. to want to be good,

do well, to pursue the good life) beyond market and state. This is based on the assumption of “economics with a human face” (Hart et al 2010:13) which is based on the postulation of Noble laureate Elinor Ostrom, that human behaviour is not always governed by self-interest (Taylor 2010:236).

However, the concept of solidarity economy is an offshoot approach that derives its theoretical-empirical strength from the broader framework of the human economy. The proponents of solidarity economy observe that ‘social enterprise’ or becoming a ‘social entrepreneurs’ have become an important aim of many development practitioners and policymakers (Hart et al 2010:15-16). Moreover, these actors are conscious about the welfare of poor people against the broader politics of international aid while taking a moral-political stand (this is reflected in my findings as well) (Mosse 2011). However, this moral stand does not contradict or conflict with their rational choices implied by the Weberian concept of officials from European bureaucracy. This framework could be used to look at the creative ways social policy entrepreneurs formulate between markets and state that upholds the idea of ‘community participation’ (ibid). This could also highlight the way they articulate and utilized the groups and networks within and beyond their instant aid institutions to initiate, advocate and mobilize resources towards what they deem to be serving the interest of poor.

Another critical dimension of the *economie solidaire* is the dominant postulation that, market economy usually thought to be neutral is not devoid of any ideology. On the one hand the advocates of the human economy approach are assured about the theoretical strength and practical existence of these phenomena, and they believe that the economic models and approaches that dominate media and universities responsible for obscuring this concept (Hart et al. 2010). On the other hand, it is argued that the human economy approach reinforces neo-

liberal programs for dismantling social democracy due to the potential tension between the attempt to develop genuinely solidarity approaches to markets and politics (Hart et al 2010).

## **2.6 Conclusion**

In this chapter while setting the disciplinary and theoretical context for my research onset, I discuss the importance of the study of policy within anthropology. This is followed by engagements with various debates and approaches applied for the broader anthropological studies of Development in general and paradigm shifts into the anthropological gaze from the recipients of development aid back to the donor institutions and actors in particular. This section also shades light on the strength and shortcomings of the dominant deconstructivist and ethnographic approaches applied to study international development. This exercise was undertaken so as to set forth the necessity of a balanced social scientific view of development that could be achieved through the combination of research methods in reference to the context of the research in hand. Later I highlight the relevance of ethnography and discourse analysis to study aid and policy. Further, the key theories of policy change are exemplified contextualizing and drawing on the similarities and common planes between them in reference to the study. The Weberian idea of rational-legal authority in bureaucracies is discussed so as to set an argument based on my fieldwork findings that go beyond the classical understanding of ‘iron-cage’ of institutional rationalization by bureaucrats. As it was perceived by Weber in his classical work on bureaucracy, that bureaucrats are trapped in ‘iron cage’ of institutional rationalization i.e. What are their rational duties according to the institutional credo against the traditional motivators of rationalization? Eventually, I elaborate on the social solidarity economy framework so as to build a theoretical premise for my

potential argument in the light of non-economic nature of the social entrepreneurial feats. Another objective is to engage with the theoretical framework, which underlines the traditional motivators against the institutionally engineered bureaucratic rationality.

This thesis describes the evolution of an aid policy framework called social exclusion while focussing on the roles of various aid bureaucrats and development practitioners from the DFID in influencing the previously mentioned policy and cognate policy processes. Here the role of the development practitioners and bureaucrats I am talking about is not regarding their standard official duties in the formal organizational setup but more about the undocumented strategies, they apply while going beyond their regular official obligations so as to help the people from the developing countries out of their personal commitment. However, this commitment could not be dovetailed in the concept of general altruistic activities or patronizing attitude of development professionals. Neither this commitment could be understood from the classical theoretical approach that underlines the institutional rationalization of modern bureaucracy. These prolonged practices were more than mere kindness out of humanitarian perspective. The longitudinal aspect and sustained nature of this informal phenomenon made me look for the concept of solidarity and hence the '*economie solidaire*' concept. However, the informal ways of undocumented policy practices should be understood as Scott (1998:6) sees, 'informal practices as an essential feature of any real, functioning social order' (in our case an institutional setup). I demonstrate it through an empirical account of the informal policy practices of social development practitioners/policy entrepreneurs that shape the policy ideas and practices in everyday lives of development practitioners. Here I am concerned with the trajectory of the policy theme within aid institution, how this is achieved in real life within the aid bureaucracy. How the policy happens through the non-profit informal endeavours of various actors I prefer to call social development entrepreneurs that go beyond mere altruistic intentions.

To develop this view of development through the idea of social development enterprise, this chapter engaged with a wide range of literature produced by expert policy analysts, policy researchers, policy makers, development practitioners, and civil servants up until the policy period under scrutiny (1998-2010).

The overarching framework of the social life of ideas (Appadurai 1995) (policy ideas or framework in this case) and the social specific contexts that lead to them and their development I have applied an actor-oriented approach to policy formation processes. This approach shall help to show that actors are not the passive conductors of the top-down flow of policy ideas nor the aid institutions are monolithic. However, both are the active catalyst of change in policy ideas within the overlapping and intersecting structures of aid organizations and beyond in the recipient countries. Nevertheless, the utilization of ‘solidarity economie’ approach shall guide in understanding the nature of intention behind informal activities that feeds into the concept of ‘social development entrepreneurship’. The social enterprise/entrepreneurial theoretical framework underlines the phenomenon of the social enterprise of aid professionals that is aimed towards the social development of poor or public welfare, in general, where no profit is intended.

Although the CDA exercises are employed to scrutinize the tendencies of powerful in reproducing the inequalities, and the top-down bias is self-evident in analysing the relations of dominance, it could also help in analysing the discursive strategies employed in naming, framing and interpreting the inequality by the way to legitimize their ‘corrective intervention’ in the name of development. While the actor-oriented approaches do help us in revealing the social life of development policy practitioners as an active agents within development industry, *economie solidarie* or social entrepreneurship is an approach that helps us



understand the rationale that motivates the social policy entrepreneurs rise above the officialdom or the iron cage of bureaucracy (Weber translated by Parsons 2005:18). Here the term social entrepreneur is used synonymously for the development practitioners and professionals from the aid bureaucracy who attempt to shape and influence the policies and projects throughout their careers in aid industry without any expectation of monetary benefit or equivalent economic value. Further, it narrows down our topic to the specific literature on policy change or the evolution of aid policy ideas.

The concept of rational choices made by bureaucrats in Western bureaucracy was looked from the lens of the emergent concept of *economie solidaire*<sup>20</sup> or social entrepreneurship. This exercise was performed to prepare theoretical grounds to analyse the undocumented policy practices that shows tendencies of non-profit activities or enterprise by individuals in the aid industry or otherwise, which is neither private nor for profit (Hart 2010:15, Defourny and Nyssens 2010:288).

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<sup>20</sup> Solidarity Economy

## **Chapter 3 Research methodology and methods**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter sketches an analytical frame of the methodology applied during the fieldwork to achieve the research objectives. This is done by providing detailed information and analysis about the research methods applied in terms of the fieldwork, the types of interviews conducted, key informants, and institutions chosen and the overall settings for fieldwork. Along with the discussions on the productive key interviews and interviewees that built the core argument of the thesis, this chapter also contains reflections on the interviews and research opportunities I was denied. It also delineates the limitations of this research as well as my interpretation of fieldwork experience, which in turn shaped the research.

#### **3.1.1 Overview of the chapter**

First, I outline the methodological framework as it was implemented in the light of exploratory and empirical fieldwork aimed at understanding the policy processes, which are normally taken for granted or undocumented due to their mundane nature. This thesis focuses on the Department for International Development (DFID) and the policy entrepreneurs within in addition to those who were engaged in policy making with DFID during my fieldwork. I locate DFID as an autonomous institution situated in Britain's highly political and strategic area i.e. Whitehall, as the research setting for my fieldwork. The first section of this chapter discusses the various research methods I employed alongside my first-hand experiences with

informants and interviewees. The second section of the chapter discusses my engagement with DFID and one of the prominent aid think tanks as an institution through its various levels of bureaucracy. In addition, I also reflect on and analyze my communications with various policy entrepreneurs and aid institutions in terms of interviews and the research opportunities offered to me.

The third section deals with the interviews I did not get to do. There are several factors behind these ‘non-interviews’ beyond simply being declined interviews in the course of fieldwork. Bureaucrats, politicians, and development consultants represent these non-interviewees whereas; the reference point of rejection of participant observation is DFID and a London-based think-tank. I look at the phenomenon of the denied participant observation and denied interviews as exclusion of an outside-researcher by institutions and their gatekeepers. This chapter concludes with discussion on the practical reasons behind positive as well as negative experiences from the fieldwork.

## **3.2 Methodology**

### **3.2.1 Exploratory research, oral histories and researching the ongoing processes of policy formation**

This research draws on the creative ways devised by policy entrepreneurs to shape public policy. The discussion in the section on “Anthropology of policy”, in Chapter 2, which elaborates on public opinion, state attitudes towards the policy, bilateral relations, and the role of ideological inclinations of development practitioners serves as a background. Initially,

I wanted to look at the reception of policies and development knowledge in aid recipient countries like India. However, later developments discussed below turned my focus on the informal strategies applied by social policy entrepreneurs involved in one of the leading aid institutions from the UK that is Department for International Development (DFID).

Even if we were to consider policy-making within UK Aid as a singular phenomenon or even DFID as a main aid institution of the UK aid, it would constitute several overlapping and intersecting layers of networks, vast numbers of actors and several organizations working together. This should give us an idea of the complexity and size of this entire process that constitutes several parallel operations or processes. This is the reason I have limited my study focus on a case study of the social exclusion policy framework within DFID, as well as various key actors who were directly or indirectly involved in policy practices and project level work related to it. The narrowing down of the focus helped me in practically completing my fieldwork and doing justice to the main theme of informal policy strategies or practices in aid institutions that emerged during research. However, I did take into consideration the equivalent examples from projects apart from the case study of social exclusion to strengthen my argument that the standard and formal official processes of policy-making are like the tip of an iceberg in policy-making. While the unacknowledged or undocumented social dimension of these policy processes constitute the remaining bulk of the policymaking or policy as a final product.

During the archive research, I identified the timeframe of emergence, traction, and decline of the social exclusion policy framework that spanned over the period of 1997 to 2010. I further narrowed down the research topic to the case study of the evolution of social

exclusion framework in DFID in a certain timeframe so as to focus on the policy practices in terms of key transitions in the course of evolution of the social exclusion policy framework. I conducted a couple of pre-fieldwork interviews with former policy entrepreneurs and aid bureaucrats. One of the interviews was with a former senior bureaucrat from the DFID and another with a DFID senior social advisor from South Asia who was quite cooperative. By virtue of their association with DFID policy and programmes in South Asia and the UK, introduced me to many other relevant contacts.

Additionally, I also draw on material not directly related to the empirical case of social exclusion framework in the DFID but related to policy practices or aid industry in general. This material builds on the information shared by the counterparts of SDAs (Social Development Advisors) from DFID and how they intervened in the policy implementation processes in similar contexts. This is included due to the related *modus operandi* of the protagonists; the policy entrepreneurs had similar characteristics. For example, these characteristics include - influencing the policy outcomes, briefing politicians, lobbying, using their agency, expertise, and insights in the wake of the humanitarian crisis and eventually to use policy framework to empower and benefit the grassroots communities. These practices are identical to the ones used during the traction of social exclusion framework in DFID. I used policy White papers, mission statements, and working papers, in addition to independent and commissioned studies conducted up until the present day to make my point. I also audited four sessions of evidence presentation in parliament by DFID officers to ministers from the opposition during meetings of the Select Parliamentary committee on international development in the month of November and December 2014 (during which I got to observe and speak with the bureaucrats from various DFID country offices, especially South Africa).

One of these bureaucrats introduced me to his former colleague who worked with him on DFID's South African office.

The overall research design of this project took a qualitative approach. The research is exploratory and historical in nature. It involved gathering historical data on policy from online and physical archives, such as the online DFID National Archives<sup>21</sup> and the British Library of Development Studies at the Institute of Development Studies, Brighton (BLDS-IDS). I visited DFID online archives and related offices like Independent Commission of Aid Impact to access their archives in order to study the publications and database. I searched for the documents and the data that is related to the development of social exclusion policy and its implementation. The policy documents I studied included the policy literature, White Papers, mission statements, reports, evaluations, and Working papers, in addition to independent and commissioned studies conducted up until the present day.

Given the prominence of civil servants and bureaucrats on various organizational levels in the DFID and INGOs, the data collected during this research shed light on the socio-political constraints experienced during the formation of social exclusion policy as well as the implementation of the policy in past. That is, it looked at the “actual production” of policy models in a socially specific context (Mosse 2005b, 2011:12) while underlining the social, institutional and political factors that make actors take or forbid to take various policy decisions. The empirical data I worked out applied to broader development policy discourses and larger institutional structures that play a crucial role in policy-making and dissemination. These policy entrepreneurs engage with various levels of the aid projects. On one hand, the

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<sup>21</sup> Available on : [http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/\\*/http://www.dfid.gov.uk/](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/*/http://www.dfid.gov.uk/)  
Accessed on 29/10/2015

recollections, testimonies, and first-hand experiences of these policy entrepreneurs working as bureaucrats, advisors and development consultants from these INGOs, provided with insight into the interplay of interests, biases, and values translated by socio-culturally situated main actors into international policy regimes. On the other hand, the analysis of findings shed light on the politics of policy decisions and political constraints faced during the “happening of policy” or policy in practice (Mosse 2011a: 2004). The testimonies and recollections of the policy entrepreneurs from their semi-structured interviews were triangulated with contemporary development, publications, and similar accounts hinted towards by other informants.

The Data was obtained by means of oral history interviews, and semi-structured lengthy interviews, many of them in two or more sessions. These interviews were more of the oral histories of their lived experiences and narratives of what happen then in retrospective. The recollections of the project and oral histories was shared by the policy entrepreneurs who were engaged with social exclusion related projects and especially policy from its initial stages (that is, the formative, implementation and advocacy stages) to the present day. This entire exercise was aided and supplemented by the analysis of references from the policy literature and closely related documents. It also included recording the narratives of policy, policy processes, policy practices, class distinctions, political and social perceptions and other related experiences of people and incidents involved that shaped the social exclusion policy framework in the UK.

The criterion applied for sampling the key interviewees was as follows. Initially, I chose the one who were involved with the social exclusion policy directly in its first stage for initial

interviews. Later on, I utilized snowball sampling to connect and contact the professional networks of development professionals directly engaged in the social exclusion policy in its various stages. I requested the key informants to recommend other most relevant informants from their professional and personal acquaintances and updated the list as per the significance of new informants to the study (Bernard 2006: 193).

My fieldwork was to be conducted in the London office of DFID and its partner INGOs, like Action Aid and Christian Aid with its bureaucrats in their respective offices from London and around. However, I could not get access to the interior of DFID head quarters or one of its main satellite think tanks and subsidiary aid organizations. I explain and discuss the potential reasons and observations thereof below. Nevertheless, many high profile DFID bureaucrats and Labour politicians denied me interviews, despite their initial willingness I was methodically avoided in the course of communication. I was implicitly denied the entry into the top aid institution and its think tank. It was a form of exclusion, an exclusion of a researcher by the sceptical institution and ‘precautious’ gatekeepers. The reluctance of gatekeepers to give me the access to the organization was one reason. At one point in time, I thought that I would be without crucial information. However, I changed my perspective and decided to incorporate my exclusion, or denial of interviews, implicit refusing of access to key institutions as non-interviews. I started quizzing and interacting with the informants who were positively co-operating, about the potential reasons behind the implicit non-cooperation on the part of some key informants and institutions. As a result, they came up with several potential reasons in the light of their own prolonged close association with ‘aidmen’ and ‘aidwomen’ and firsthand experience in the aid industry. Such a reliance on their part enabled me to further delineate the powerful and often invisible discourse that the actors were immersed in as well as it helped me to analyze the non-interviews.



Later on, I changed my research strategy and decided to engage specifically with those who had formerly worked as DFID bureaucrats, aid-managers, policy makers, and experts from INGOs like Action Aid and Christian Aid and International Development Institution like DFID. In addition, I sought to engage those who have worked in India on projects related to social exclusion as well as those who played a key role in the traction of the social exclusion framework in DFID.

I did in-depth semi-structured interviews with them. Semi-structured interviewing is said to be effective in projects where we are dealing with high-level bureaucrats and people with the tight time schedule (Bernard 2006: 212). As this research is about past policy and historical in nature, the information I looked for was very likely to be collected through recording the recollections and lived experiences of those who were involved in the policy and related events and activities. The length, depth, and nature of my rather prolong semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions later made me think and treat that information in terms of oral history interviews.

‘Oral history is the systematic collection of living people’s testimony about their own experiences. Oral history is not folklore, gossip, hearsay, or rumour. Oral historians attempt to verify their findings, analyze them, and place them in an accurate historical context’<sup>22</sup> Whereas, structured and semi-structured interviews involve certain format of limited questions that restricts the potential flow of information from the interviewee in the case of oral history interviews you encourage and let the narration flow through the spontaneity of interviewee. During oral history interviews, you slightly nudge or guide the informants about

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<sup>22</sup> Available on: [http://dohistory.org/on\\_your\\_own/toolkit/oralHistory.html#WHATIS](http://dohistory.org/on_your_own/toolkit/oralHistory.html#WHATIS) Accessed on 22/06/2016

the on-going discussion, rather than leading them hence the form or technicality of the interview is avoided while letting the informant describe what it was like and how did they live the experience. Most of the oral history interviews were conducted with former DFID civil servants and social development advisors. These were retired DFID bureaucrats or development professionals. I realized that they were quite enthusiastic to share their professional experiences and anecdotal events they were part of during their career as international development professional. During the oral history interviews, sometimes they use to call in to their home while other times we use to meet in some park or coffee house or university common rooms in central London. I conducted some oral interviews on phone and Skype also. However, I also did structured and unstructured interviews with few informants as they had other engagements and limited time. The tape-recorded interviews were both structured and unstructured.

While interviewing Action Aid and Christian Aid officials and development practitioners, I used a similar set of questions that I used for the DFID people with little variation. This helped me in comparative analysis and triangulation of the information between working bureaucrat and retirees, such as narratives of policy, subjective experiences of institutional politics and problems they have faced while working on policy-based projects. This was aided by oral history and semi-structured in-depth interviews, archives study for policy papers and related documents in the parliamentary archives in the UK (which were available online). During this pre and post-research archive study, I kept in mind the inter-organizational coalitions and networks among official members of the organization which is deemed to be more crucial for the agency than the formal organization to which these actors belong (Long and Long 1992:23; Eyben 2005:2).

Initially, I corresponded with at least ten development professionals that included former DFID bureaucrats, academic consultants, and policy makers to start with. Later I contacted more after I obtained email consent from people from the above-mentioned institutions. I interviewed mostly upper and intermediary actors, i.e. experts, policy makers, consultants, aid managers, senior bureaucrats and NGO and INGO staff from the UK. This included development practitioners, social development advisors, governance advisors, academic-professionals and policy makers who have dealt with social exclusion policy. At least five informants were living outside the UK. Hence, I did telephonic and online interviews via Skype with them.

Additionally, as per the conditions of my informed consent form, it was pertinent on my part to protect the identity of my high profile key informants who have been directly involved in the informal policy processes mentioned in this thesis. Therefore, I took efforts to maintain anonymity about the projects and offices they have held during the time frame of the policy theme under study by changing the names of the informants and the demographic locations they were active in. However, in some places in my thesis I deemed it essential to refer the institutions involved by their original names so as I can contextualize their words and actions of still anonymised informants accordingly. Where the information in the dissertation is directly from my informants, I acknowledge them by putting their (pseudo) names in parentheses. A full listing of all my informants' pseudonyms can be found in the list of pseudonyms of informants.

### **3.3 Research methods**

#### **3.3.1 Critical discourse analysis (CDA)**

In the European context of development policy, the phenomenon of development is viewed as a discourse (Karagiannis 2004:5). Discourse, as defined by Foucault (Weedon 1987:108), refers to “the ways of constituting knowledge, together with the social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations which inhere in such knowledge and relations between them”. Discourses are more than ways of thinking and producing meaning. They constitute the “nature of the body, unconscious and conscious mind and emotional life of subjects they seek to govern” (Weedon, 1987:108).

Discourse analysis in anthropology started as an ethnography of speaking or ethnography of communication, it has also been aimed towards analyzing the structures of meaning and intention "beyond the sentence" (Fairclough 2003:6). However, the CDA exercise scrutinizes the context and sub-text of the text so as to understand the objective inherent in the statement made, language spoken or text written (Fairclough 2003:6). In our case, this is how the socially excluded were defined or institutionally constructed. If we replace the psychological aspect of the body in the definition by Weedon (1987:108) offered above, with physical and hence social, economical and political dimensions of the human body, we could see the logic behind what necessitated the CDA of social exclusion framework.

In this case, the purpose of the CDA is to reveal the discourse specific social, ideological (Dijk 2006:353-54) and cultural aspects of social exclusion as a conceptual framework with the aid of various CDA tools in two different contexts. Again the aim of the entire exercise is

to look at the ascriptive contribution of variously located actors in their socio-political context to the two definitions of social exclusion. CDA aims to achieve this by explaining various discursive techniques used to create the discourse and its broader frame. Critical discourse analysts have analyzed terms like empowerment, gender, civil society, discrimination, and poverty as well as various kinds of speech, text, and images represented in the literature produced on global development intervention endeavours (Sachs 1992; Cornwall and Brock 2005; Batliwala 2007; Eyben 2011). The discourses on development and underdevelopment produced by academics, development professionals, international aid agencies and international development think tanks like Overseas Development Institute and Institute of Development Studies have been the focus of study as well (Chambers and Alfini 2010; Batliwala 2007). However, here I will look at the variations between two versions of the conceptual framework of social exclusion. I will underline the similarities and distinctions in between the versions during its various locations and objectives it was perceived to be designed for.

CDA stands for the deconstruction of a concept or idea or a dominant presentation by critically analyzing the three important parts that they constitute: genre, style and the discourse (Fairclough 2003, pp.123-133). It is pertinent to keep in mind the centrality of text analysis to discourse analysis that moves its focus from specific texts in the order of discourse, what according to Fairclough (2003:4) is “the relatively durable social structuring of language which is itself one element of the relatively durable structuring and networking of social practices.”

From this point of view, there is not a single discourse of social exclusion. Rather, there are as many discourses as there are texts those are produced in their peculiar political, regional, social context at different junctures of time. However, there are still the text specific recurring elements an order of the ideas in the discourse of social exclusion that trickled down to the definition of the latest one.

### **3.3.2 Actor-oriented approach and undocumented practices**

Following the CDA treatment of the policy framework, I wanted to apply similar theoretical methods to deconstruct the context specific narratives and policy discourses woven by the development professional. Postmodernist theory holds development phenomenon and cognate processes of project and policy knowledge production as a monolithic and hegemonic process. The deconstructionist approach did not help much in making sense of the lived experiences and the informal actions and intentions of development agents going beyond the organizational forms and order (Gardner and Lewis 1996:24-25).

The post-development deconstructionist theory perceives development as a hegemonic and homogenizing phenomenon with neo-colonizing effects (Escobar 1995, Sachs 1992). This theory has two shortcomings. First, it neglects the agency of the development agents and the constructive role that development may play in the countries with weak governance and fragile infrastructure (Sande lie 2004, Pollard and Street 2010:3). The second, the bias of hegemony in the post-development deconstructionist approach towards development does not help in interpreting the changes development institutions undergo or the informal attempts of insiders to better the policy and development practices directed towards poverty alleviation (Gardner and Lewis 2000 :16-17).

Given these shortcomings, I was drawn towards the actor-oriented approach to aid me in understanding the informal practices and social development entrepreneurial spirit among to the development agents. Long (2001:14). observes that "the advantage of an actor-oriented approach is that it aims to grasp precisely the issues of lived experiences through a systematic ethnographic understanding of the 'social life' of development projects from conception to realization as well as the responses and lived experiences of the variously located and affected social actors." Moreover, the actor-oriented approach's emphases "the agency of actor assumes that, although some people have more power than others, there are not deep structures that constrain the actor or the less powerful, enabling them to contest, challenge, negotiate and capture" (Eyben 2004:23). This theme emerged during my fieldwork concentrating on the agency and roles played by key actors and development agents in shaping a specific policy framework. However, I found a logical affinity with the actor-oriented approach combined with discursive analysis for my research in two different contexts i.e. to understand the policy formation practices and the framing processes i.e. conceptual formulation of policy.

### **3.3.3 Various types of data**

The majority of data I have collected is qualitative in nature. Other than, the data derived from primary resources through online and physical archives from DFID, ODI, and IDS, most of the data is based on my observations and participations in events organized by

organizations like BOND,<sup>23</sup> and Parliamentary Select Committee and Independent Commission for Aid Impact. It is also based on oral history, semi-structured and extempore or unstructured interviews, narratives, discussions, and informal conversations with various informants I have recorded or noted manually. I have also used selective datum from electronic mails, electronic communications with the informants in making points for their reluctance to reciprocate or cooperate. Besides the tape-recorded structured and unstructured interviews, I have also taken notes on the informal and parts of unplanned or off-record conversations that I had later incorporated in the thesis without divulging the identity or any revelation of the person. The notes included the remarks, off-record statements, observations of various settings, phrases used, value-laden adjectives, metaphors and allegories used in passing. Therefore, the data I have accumulated could be classified into off-record and on-record data. While the aforementioned data is off-record, the on-record data I gathered is in the form of recordings of semi-structured and structured interviews, printed literature, electronic documents, aid-impact reports, Parliamentary papers, ICAI papers, evaluation reports, commissioned research papers, working papers and White papers. The on-record data also includes the recordings of telephonic interviews and Skype interviews and notes taken during interviews.

Since my strategy to enter the DFID premises or as a last recourse at the least to shadow key DFID bureaucrats in their day -to-day work did not materialize, I resorted to hanging around where I could hope to meet professionals from the UK Aid in general and DFID in particular. While hanging around the DFID premises, Parliament and Hansard buildings, I often stumbled upon some of my informants in informal settings such as coffee houses, cafes,

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<sup>23</sup> BOND is the UK membership body for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in international development



public parks, restaurants, and diners. Of course, everyone was referred or introduced by somebody and acquainted to me from some event related to the development industry. Although most of my interviews were semi-structured, I did have informal discussions with two or more people many times from development industry in the cafe or canteen in the premises of these buildings. I followed the casual interactions, impromptu discussions, and elaborations of those around on the topic of my interest rather than leading them. These conversations usually followed my formal introduction, or after someone introducing me to the potential informants. Nevertheless, I shared my research interest and picking up relevant bits of information from the ensuing discussions.

### **3.4 Entering the field**

In the first phase of my fieldwork, I wanted to get access to physical archives of the Department for International Development (DFID), UK so that I could study the official correspondence between the Ministry and DFID bureaucracy. I wrote a formal request to DFID inquiring about access to its physical archives. However, I was told that most of the DFID documents are online – as per its ‘transparency’ policy – and thus I was suggested that there was no need for me to access the archives as everything is online. I was able to access a number of documents, such as White papers, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, departmental Evaluations, Reports, and policy papers (DFID Publications<sup>24</sup>). However, I was not able to find any past official correspondence or proceedings and communication between DFID office and the Ministry, which is what I was really interested in. Meanwhile, I learned about DFID’s electronic document and records management programme called QUEST. On

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<sup>24</sup> Available on: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments%5B%5D=department-for-international-development> last Accessed on : 12/03/2015

request to access to it, I was told that only DFID employees can have access to it, not an ‘outsider’. This was my second experience of ‘implicit exclusion’ as a researcher. I sought guidance from a senior researcher and they told me about the Right to Information (RTI) something they did during one of their research. I considered filing an RTI, but I did not want to look desperate or to alarm the DFID gatekeepers as my request regarding participant observation of DFID was in process. Therefore, I quietly let go of that option.

### **3.4.1 The Daunting DFID**

My own speculations and habit of connections and comparisons between incidents, experiences, and institutions during fieldwork attracted my attention towards the inter-institutional relations of Legislative assembly and DFID. The history of UK aid has also been the history of changing relations between parliament and DFID, which, were subject to the political party in power. Labour has been quite liberal and experimenting with international development to the extent that it restructured a subdivision of Foreign office into a cabinet level department giving it relative autonomy. However, the Conservatives have been more reserved about this entire idea of international development for the sake of global poverty reduction (informant David, Rebecca).

Although, state, bureaucracy, and related institutional structures are normally hierarchical in nature they are pulsating with the flow of overlapping and intersecting ideas. The nature of this flow of ideas is non-linear but interconnected and beyond the physical range of the

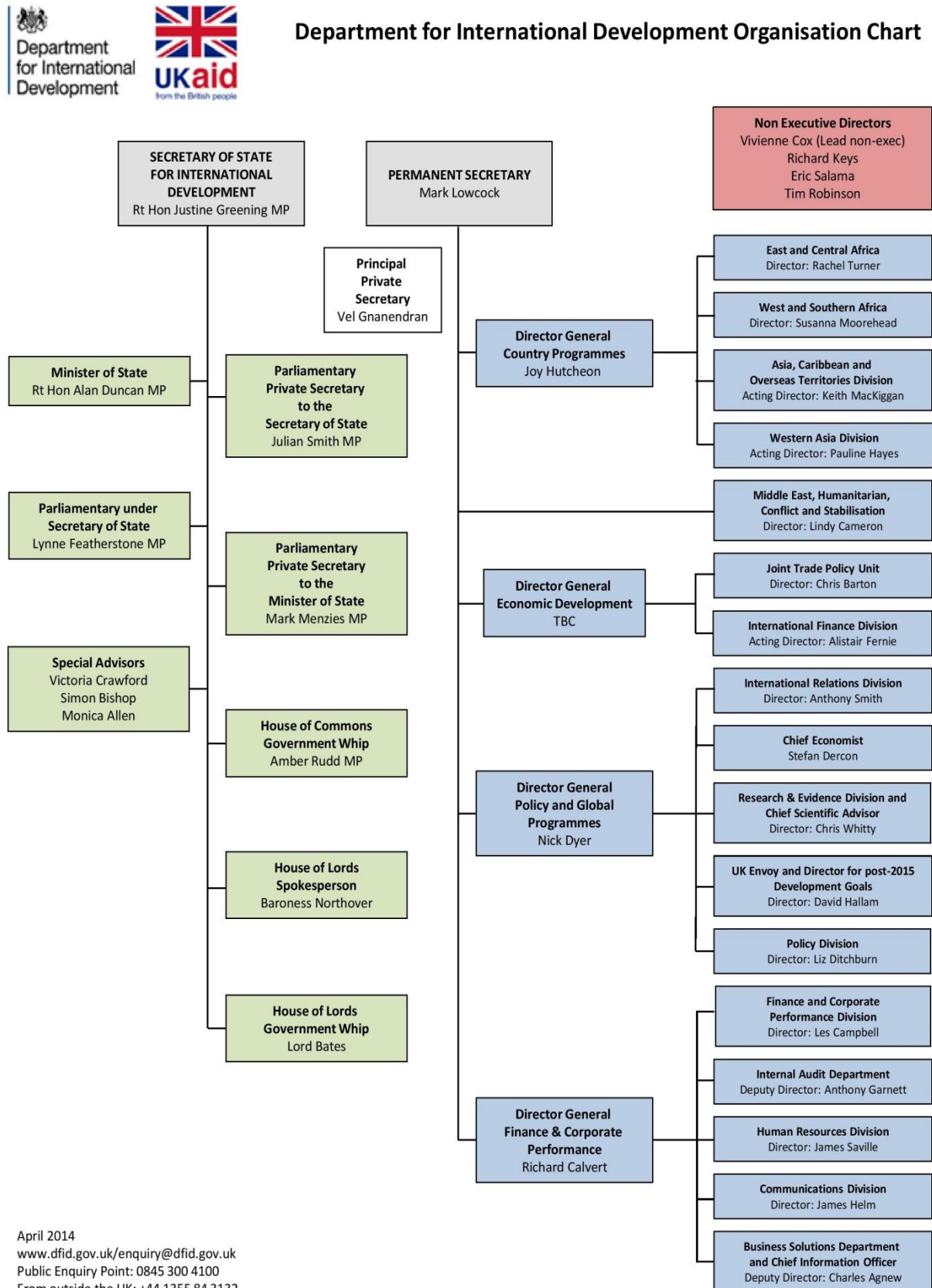
organizations (see Chapter 4). The organizational structures have their own aims to achieve which are guided by their internal policies. The organizational structure regulates the internal mechanism of control, delegation, and authority within any organization. Therefore, the stakeholders in authority are realigned through changes within the structure. Nevertheless, the structure serves the organization philosophy or internal policy through different factors and actors according to the objectives they have subscribed to. However, even these objectives are not static but are changeable and they change as per the change of the power in the center and the priorities of government in power. The accession of a new political party can entail the change in the departments, change of the administrative powers and processes, change in authorities, and change in administrative landscapes according to the political preferences and ideologies of the party in power. The shift in policy agendas is not immune to these changes.

The policy shift influenced by overarching polity and ideology reflected in the work culture and over the modus operandi of DFID under different political rule (Informants: David, Neil, Caroline). If we study the flow of power and division of authority in the organization chart of DFID, we can see the descending hierarchization of power and authority between two institutions. Legislature represented by a cabinet-level minister, parliamentary secretaries, and couple of other ministers who oversees the rest of DFID's civil administration with the help executives further divided into subdivisions that perform certain jobs like policy making, finance, governance and running DFID offices in different aid recipient countries.

A cursory look at the DFID organization chart shows us a higher place of political/legislative offices on the top of executive and administrative officials further branching into parallel symmetries of sub-divisions of various country chapters of DFID and divisions of policy,

economic and governance. The sitting MP, i.e. Secretary of State for International development and Permanent secretary followed by other parliamentary secretaries, directors, and acting directors of various divisions of DFID sheds light on the ascending flow of power and descending flow of authority. This decentralization of power may seem to be in tune with the spirit of the democratic political system, however, the power of decision-making narrows down with the narrowing authority. To the level of our protagonist social development advisors, governance advisors, and policy entrepreneurs, there is less space to take decisions or to mend policies or practices. These organizational structures and power hierarchies are not a monolith, but part flexible and part rigid and those who are with tacit knowledge of how networks and interest groups work can make the most of it (Informants: Marlyn, Rebecca, and Larry ). As a couple of examples from my fieldwork, illustrate in this chapter. However, the point is the intra- and inter-institutional interactions that influence the internal workings have political underpinnings as well as the flow of information back and forth the networks situated in organizational structures. This aided by political pressure results in the resistance to outside inquiry, which was not an exception in my case. The common thread of unanimity on resistance to outside inquiry runs through these intertwined institutions wherein the superior institution regulates the subordinate. The relative autonomy or freedom is subject to the internal policies and politics of ruling party at any time (Informants: Caroline, David). However, this does not mean the researcher would not get a helping hand from insiders and gatekeepers, but it also depends on upon the perseverance and connecting to the right people (fieldwork observation/heuristic notes).

Fig. 1.1 The DFID Organization Chart



DFID's London headquarter is housed in Whitehall. The department was relocated from the rented offices next to Buckingham Palace to an unused government freehold at 22 Whitehall in 2013. Whitehall is an area around Westminster that houses most of the government buildings of political and strategic importance in Britain. The concentration of other buildings and offices of political and military importance around it could assess the strategic salience of this area.

The 'establishment' – usually used as the synonym for state activities and infrastructure – is a vague term, but if we have to exemplify something tangible akin to the term, this area could be closest urban and visual signifier. The government buildings in Whitehall, from south to north, include HM Treasury, HM Revenue, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 10 Downing Street, Cabinet Office, Ministry of Defence, Office of the Parliamentary Counsel, Department for Energy and Climate Change and 22 Whitehall i.e. the Department for International Development<sup>25</sup>.

The DFID building is divided into three storeys that have undergone refurbishment and conservation plan of historic buildings with contemporary architecture. The Whitehall building complex 22-26 are covered with a glass atrium and old elevations has been removed so as to house open office floors to the light-filled space. As we step into the building, we are greeted by at least three security personnel guarding the main building entrances, i.e. main entrance, inner building entrance, and small passage stairs on the extreme left. A reception counter is in the center of the main entrance hall with a large front sitting arrangements for visitors and outsiders to wait before they are called upstairs or inside the building. This was

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<sup>25</sup> Available on :<http://www.hok.com/design/service/renovation-restoration/cabinet-office-22-26-whitehall/>  
Accessed on 28/06/2014

the place where I mostly used to sit while visiting the DFID office ‘externally’, and one that has the biggest visual impression on my recollections.

Like most of the Cabinet-level, buildings in Whitehall the architecture of 22 Whitehall too exude the air of serious bureaucracy that signifies the core of the British establishment. However, this was not same with its old building or office culture as some informants recollect. The new DFID office has heavy security features those with reception as well as security check that issues pass for access to the interior of the main building. In my case, the condition of the full-time attendant to escort me into the interior was used besides the security pass.

DFID’s moving its offices to Whitehall was a decision of the neo-coalition government led by the Conservative party. It was claimed to have saved taxpayers' millions on expensive rent and overheads. More business-like performance and efficient use of office space and flexible working practices were expected from those that worked in the department. However, the ‘real’ concerns of the Conservative party about giving more autonomy to the International Development department in the past as well as the present are not hidden. In the course of fieldwork, different sources have repeatedly hinted at the unacknowledged intention of the Conservative party, in particular, to keep the International Development department well within the jurisdiction and administrative proximity of the Foreign Office (informant). One of the main reasons is to keep DFID bureaucracy and the activities of UK Aid under constant check (informant). In official language and as per DFID press release on the moving of the DFID office, it was ‘a decision taken by the department’s Ministers and the Permanent

Secretary to sit closer to their teams<sup>26</sup>, (DFID 2013). This building evaded my every attempt to be a part of its everyday life as part of participatory research.

### **3.5 The Cooperative Informants**

The social background and political convictions of informants influence their actions in important ways. In this section I describe these convictions and the ways they informed the interview process and my relations with them.

As many as fifteen of the social development entrepreneurs who belonged to DFID, Action Aid, and other INGOs, with few (least three to four) exceptions, grew up in middle-class family background with progressive but principled parents. However, only a few of my informants could maintain their activist vigour and reformer's zeal while working in aid bureaucracy. Those that could were able to do so due to their involvement with ideologically inspired social circles. Majority of the informants had at least a degree in some or other discipline from the social sciences. Some of the policy entrepreneurs had either one or both of their parents in academia and some informants had a father who worked as colonial officers.

The father of key informant who successfully advocated for social exclusion policy taught in a reputed institution of higher learning in the UK. This informant credited his disposition towards helping the poor or making a real difference in the lives of poor to his father's teachings. Another informant, who hailed from a lower middle-class background, did her degree from a not so renowned university and she experienced secondary treatment due to her

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<sup>26</sup> Available on: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/office-move-savings-from-dfids-relocation-to-whitehall>  
Accessed on: 28/06/2014



lower class status and gender, credited her leanings to her evolved consciousness of solidarity as a member of a "have not" community and as a woman working in the development industry. I could see a common thread of solidarity and selfless commitment towards the cause of poverty alleviation utilizing one's position, power, and resources in hand, running beneath all these informal policy practices or efforts. Of course, these informants were receiving their wages or remunerations like the rest of their counterparts and they would have rather not pursued their passion at the cost of losing their job in adverse situations. However, what made them different was their passion for "doing one's bit for poor" within the confines of formal organizational set up while networking with people across aid industry and developing countries. Of course, their passionate behaviour did win them clients and earn them commissioned work and economic opportunities due to their endeavours and they could see the connections but they also discerned between making profit out of it and doing actual work for the cause of poverty alleviation.

Dan was an independent consultant he was a believer. He had huge experience and vast network of the development practitioners, aid professionals, and civil society organizations from all over the world. However, he had very few friends in the UK who would freely associate with him due to the religious undercurrents behind his commitment to helping poor communities. However, I found him very understanding, experienced, and pragmatic. I benefitted immensely from his 'wisdom'. Many times these social development entrepreneurs (both male and female) experienced indirect resistance or verbal punishment for their informal policy practices at the hands of their conformist colleague, such as joking, derisory remarks, ridicule, (indirect) excommunication, and name calling behind their back.

Marlyn was another informant who was incredibly cooperative. She had prior work experience as a development advisor and researcher in South Asia. Moreover, she showed many signs of empathy with India and with its population. This was probably due to her childhood memories of India during the last days of colonial rule when her father was commissioned in India. Later in her professional life, she got an opportunity to work in India among its subaltern populations. By virtue of her direct involvement with local activists and social movements, unlike many expatriate development practitioners, she was tuned into the ground realities and social plights of impoverished in South Asia.

I found less resistance and more cooperation among the retired bureaucrats. Moreover, my informal and formal sessions with these former or veteran employees had a cathartic effect on them. For instance, most of the informants who were retired from their active jobs from the DFID were actually delighted and eager to speak with me about their experiences related to my research topic. They used to savour the experiences and memories of the situations and circumstances they lived while sharing the information with me. I could feel their joy, satisfaction, anguish, frustration or feeling of worthiness reflected in their words, expressions, chuckles, enthusiasm, and laughs while describing various events and anecdotal incidences as if it all happened in the recent past. In the process of recollecting their memories, they were emotionally charged but positive and cooperative so much so that some of them voluntarily offered to meet me for further interview sessions giving me adequate, time to record the oral history interviews. However, I was fortunate enough to formally interview as well as hang around with some of the key informants during their free time and be a part of their social life to some extents. At such time, besides informal discussions of their lived experiences in the aid industry. I did oral history interviews with those who gave me the opportunity to meet them more than once.

The above information summarizes the social, educational, ideological characteristics of Marlyn, Judith, Dan, John, Ryan, Larry, Rebecca, Alice, David, Ray, Jim and Alex and many others informants who were quite helpful to me and who made my research project possible. Moreover, compared to their reluctant counterparts the abovementioned social policy entrepreneurs were quite convinced and confident about the utility of social scientific inquiry into the phenomenon of international development for better-informed aid practices.

### **3.5.1 Gated aid communities, and surviving the fieldwork “exclusion”**

In these days of ‘transparency’ buzz (Cornwall and Brock 2005), ‘audit culture’ (Strathern 2000), and wider democratic accountability on the part of the state and its various institutions, the cold shoulder I was receiving was an unusual experience of my own exclusion. Being an erstwhile social activist and untouchable caste background covert and overt exclusion were not new for me. Moreover, my lived experiences from India and abroad made me more sensitive about any kind of ‘othering’ or ‘exclusion’. However, such experiences in a bureaucratic set up from the liberal and democratic British society at the hands of non-Indians were unnerving and disenchanting. Being an Indian who always cherished the liberal and democratic values of West in general and the UK in particular it was like breaking of an ideal.

Some of the prospective key informants and organizations central to my research repeatedly declined series of my interview requests during my fieldwork. This made me think about my own exclusion as a researcher. I was baffled as I was dismayed. I did receive a couple of denials initially, but a series of later refusals by key informants was a shocker to me. On top

of this, I received what could be described as the ‘cold shoulder treatment’ by premier aid organizations from UKAid<sup>27</sup>, which was also discouraging. In the back of my mind, I already started speculating and making connections of related events and likelihood so as to grasp the situation. First thing first came to my mind was my ethnic origin as a non-white male trying to study an institution of political-economic importance from the Europe. The bilateral relations and mutual political-economic relations between this institution and country of my origin, where this organization is active in development efforts, were also one of the assumptions that coloured by perceptions of my own exclusion as a researcher. My speculations were not unfounded. The first thing that came to my mind was that this has happened in the wake of my appeal for participant observation in DFID. Another occurrence was that all of these ‘prospective’ interviewees were in some way or another, directly dealing with my research topic in the past during the period of the Labour government and shifts in political power. In addition, these potential interviewees had also worked in close coordination with officials of Indian government and leading policy entrepreneurs and development practitioners from Indian sub-continent. An afterthought that reminded me of the defensive role of Indian DFID employees in publication rebuttal followed by the publication of Mosse’s controversial book ‘Cultivating the development’ consolidated my doubts. Not only the key actors from the DFID, office, UK but their counterparts from Indian office of DFID were also reluctant in involving in my research. Surprisingly, I found out that many of them were trained anthropologists. Often the interview denial used to be followed by ‘detailed online conversation’ on research topic and ‘(failed) implicit negotiations’ on the phone or otherwise on (topics) what we shall speak about. I was intrigued by the potential reasons for these denials. I might have ignored this phenomenon, but it seemed to be another

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<sup>27</sup> UKAid is an official nomenclature adopted by UK Government for British Governments to publicly acknowledge the development programmes funded by the UK taxpayer.

way of investigating the workings of power throughout aid organizations and their dealings with the enquiring public.

The critical analysis of such behaviour of aid institutions, bureaucrats, development practitioners, and politicians with an external inquiry will shed light on the range of the factors and phenomenon involving individual behaviour in an organizational setup. In addition, such an analysis will highlight how 'closed' organizations reflect their insecurities that produce the cultures of secrecy and bunkered aid (*Duffield et al. 2008, pp. 25/26*).

As I have accounted for earlier, while I was working on my research design I decided to use the 'snowballing' method so as to get the most relevant informants for my research interviews and further help during fieldwork. Being an 'outsider-researcher', I took this decision with an expectation that I will get the benefit from the goodwill of my potential interviewees. It was my assumption that I might also be introduced to some gatekeepers from UKAid, so as to facilitate my entry into DFID for participant observation, a thought that proved a mirage for me during my fieldwork.

Soon I realized that I was being ignored by the DFID, by those who were dealing with requests like mine, by the policy directors and their subordinate officials. I planned to approach a higher authority in DFID. I wanted to make a positive and strong case of convincing DFID of the potential benefits of my research to them. In order to do this, I obtained a strong recommendation letter from a former 'senior' bureaucrat. By virtue of their training as an anthropologist, they were quite empathic and co-operating towards my research. They kindly wrote a letter for me that underlined the potentials of ethnographic knowledge for the 'learning processes' for aid institutions, highlighted how it could be

helpful for the efficient delivery of development. I sent an email to the head of profession for Social Development at DFID followed by the recommendation letter (16/01/2014). I waited and waited for a response, but nothing came; not even a one-liner.

Therefore, I devised another strategy I decided to frequent to the Whitehall and Westminster area that had DFID building and other buildings like Portcullis house where many key development professionals and potential key informants were supposed to find or come for their official duties such as giving evidence and presenting their side of testimonies to the peoples' representatives. I frequently visited Whitehall and Westminster, and thus I happened to meet a couple of whom I was trying to get hold over regarding the opportunity of participant observation in DFID. One of them was Ron. He is what could be described as 'top brass', the one dealing with policy and global programmes of DFID, whom I was sending emails for months without any reply. I was frustrated, as I wanted to meet him in person for more direct communication. However, he did not care to reply my half dozen emails in past. Fortunately, I came across Ron in Parliament. When I saw Ron in the corridors of the House of Commons, I knew that I had to meet and speak with him no matter what it took. I knew that I would have my chance when he was scheduled to provide his evidence in front of the parliamentary select committee on International Development. While he was talking in Parliament, I found his secretary, who informed me that after the session in parliament he would join some signatories in the tearoom. I waited outside the Parliament room for over an hour. As soon he finished his evidence, I followed him to the tearoom. After five to six minutes of waiting, I smilingly moved towards him formally introducing myself to him while shaking his hand. After hearing me say my name, Ron said, 'Did I meet you earlier'?

**SB:** No probably, I sent you a couple of emails. In addition, that is why my name might have sounded familiar to you. I sent a request to you regarding participant observation in DFID Office.

**Ron:** Oh, yes, I remember now, so how is your research going? What are you doing here (he had a slight expression of surprise on his face as he was least expecting me to meet there)?

**SB:** I was auditing some of the International select committee proceedings as a part of my fieldwork.

**Ron:** O well done! How can I help?

**SB:** I have sent you a couple of emails requesting an internship, but to no avail. I would be obliged if I could get the opportunity to do participant observation in DFID office.

**Ron:** Ummm... what do you want to 'observe'?

**SB:** I wish to study the work culture, communication, interaction, and decisions taking activities on policy levels.

**Ron:** Oh, well, that is daunting (he laughed). Shrikant, it is very hard to think people take decisions in real time. It is very complicated procedure. However, I will speak to my office people and see what I can do. I will have to think how we are going to fit you into it. Please send me an email refereeing to today's meeting and I will come back to you.

Ron sounded genuine in his assurance, but I did not feel the convincing pulse and certainty in his tone. I requested him again in an earnest tone to consider my case and we parted our

separate ways. A couple of things could not escape my observations during our conversation. Ron's familiarity with my name proved that his secretary or the related person in reference to my request must have approached him. Secondly, although he was right to say about the policy 'decisions' not been taken in real time, through my participant observation I was anticipating much larger learning about the work culture of the DFID, he had an idea about. His unease to my project 'participant observation' belied his utterance '...though I will speak to my ...people'...I will have to think'.

I sent a reminder email to Ron the next day, referring to our meeting in the parliament. Unsurprisingly, it took him a month to reply to me. His private secretary wrote to me on his behalf expressing the inability of DFID in offering an internship while unfailingly complimenting me with "best wishes" for my future research endeavours. A standard expression of courtesy in the wake of any such denial sounded hollow to me that time. Nonetheless, at least I got a reply this time. I understood that the office was extremely busy, but what was beyond my cognizance was the sheer negligence of a formal inquiry or request and the non-accommodating behaviour on the part of the institution. I speculated that this may be true of any governmental department, more so with the DFID.

### **3.5.2 Nobody likes to be observed, not even a 'goldfish'!**

Dan was a former senior civil servant who had served DFID in the past. He now works as an independent development consultant with his own consultancy. He is in his late sixties and is one of the more outspoken and most cooperative informants I came across during my fieldwork. He is clearly a believer who is committed to the broader cause of global poverty



reduction. He has more than two decades of first-hand experience in UK Aid intervention in South Asia.

Dan and I were sitting on the terrace of Somerset House while sipping our first coffee of the day. It was a sunny day, at least during the time we sat there. We were talking about the changing work cultures of UK Aid organizations throughout the years. It is then that I confided with Dan. I said:

Dan, my experience with aid bureaucracy has been terrible. What could be the reason behind these top brass officials from DFID literally neglected my email requests and discouraged my attempts for ‘participant observation’ or sometimes did not even care to reply me at all?

Dan replied:

Usually ‘we’ tend to keep away from the ‘problematic’ requests so as to discourage the applicant in the first place. Hence, we ignore them. Besides our really busy schedule, with external meetings, the huge amount of emails we receive works as a handy excuse in such cases. Mostly our daily official routine work of senior bureaucrats is divided into inter-institutional meetings, writing reports, briefing to superiors and receiving briefings from junior officers.

‘But... but... what makes the researchers ‘problematic’?’ I questioned him rather impatiently.

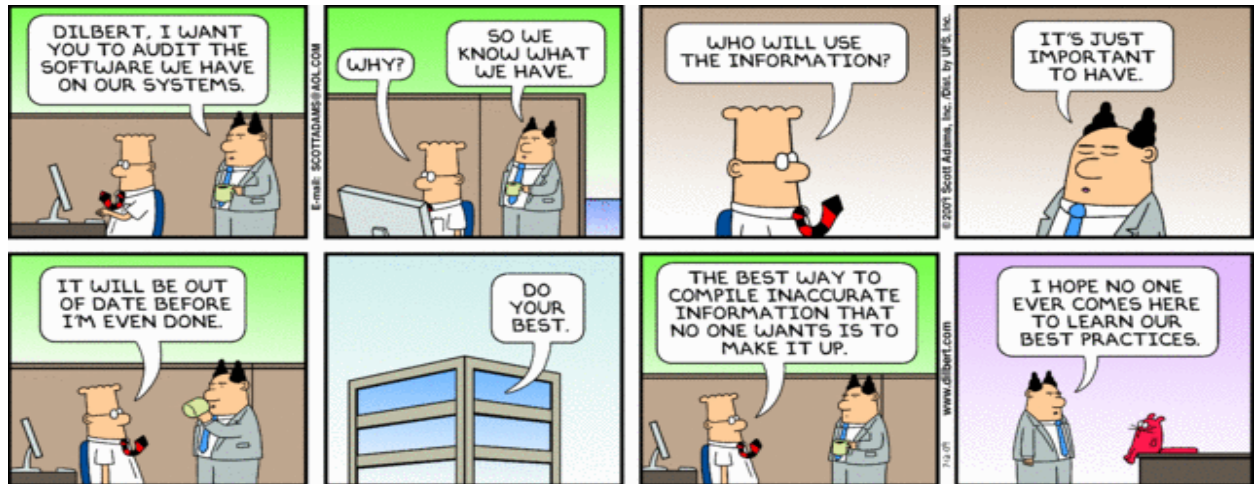
Dan answered:

We [bureaucrats] all feel a kind of responsibility towards the institution we work with and in the back of our mind; we know we are accountable to the ‘higher ups.’ Especially, these day citizens have been questioning the utility of foreign aid and there is a kind of unrest among the taxpayers. Ministers and state secretary are quite sensitive to any kind of negative publicity. Moreover, you don’t want to expose your office or institution to

unwanted scrutiny either by a researcher or by any third party. Nobody wants a problem; nobody likes to be observed, not even a goldfish, do you? It is more stressful if it happens to be an independent researcher. (He chuckled)

The self-explanatory Cartoon strip of Gilbert from Ross Eyben's Oxfam blog pdf:

### Stuff happens



(Courtesy from Ross Eyben's Oxfam blog post<sup>28</sup>)

On a similar note, another informant, Ryan, who was then a senior researcher revealed another dimension of the potential reasons behind the closed behaviour of DFID. He said this behaviour alludes to the “Whitehall factor”. He elaborated: “Becoming a part of Whitehall must have caused changes in the organizational culture of DFID.” By “Whitehall factor” he meant the kind of closed work culture from the Whitehall area where DFID was relocated. Ryan expanded:

Especially when your office shares space within the area like Whitehall then it becomes challenging because the work ethics and culture of such politically strategically intensive and powerful workspace encroaches the ways of the new institution. It is kind of contagious. You end up emulating the organizational culture from the rest of the area; it

<sup>28</sup> Available on : <https://oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/stuff-happens-the-risks-of-a-results-agenda-guest-post-from-rosalind-eyben/> Accessed on: 1/12/2015

becomes kind of indirect compulsion. Likewise, the relocation of DFID building in political–strategically important surroundings had its serious implication and influence on the self-projection of the new office and inadvertently on its inhabitants.

Recollecting the days before DFID moved to Whitehall area, nostalgically he said:

Then the ambiance within the DFID office was quite liberal, there was less political and less internal pressure on the employees. Nor were there such check mechanisms. People can argue and had the liberty to innovate, contribute, and be proactive in their approach and activities towards poverty alleviation program. All they have to do is to convince their bosses and pose the right arguments. Those were the days of understanding and consideration.

A former senior bureaucrat and eminent development professional consultant, who asked to remain anonymous, was quite pragmatic in his approach towards analyzing the cold shoulder phenomena by top dogs from the DFID, he said:

“Inquiries like yours, or potential studies that dig into the past policy phenomenon that is linked to present policy shift, there is a good possibility that might picture the incumbent or former political actors in black colour. The potential exposition might involve taking sides or justifying either former political power or oppose those who are in power. Whatever is the outcome this would cause a conflict of interest and goes against the grain of vested interest, career wise, institutional responsibility. How do you think the range of bureaucracy would react to the scrutiny of the government in power that put the ‘police under inquiry’ on the back stove? For instance, I would not like to be identified with my (off record) statement in reference to the above- mentioned context as this might ruin my relations with Labour or Neo-coalition government, political actors. So what I would do, I would not entertain you in the first place.”

During my second attempt to get access into DFID a new idea came up, it was suggested by a well-wishing former researcher. I proposed to do “shadowing” of the head of Social Development in DFID for a period of a week or two. The idea was that I would follow a senior DFID bureaucrat observing her official schedule and nature of work. It was a middle path between doing two-month long participant observation and doing an interview for a couple of hours. It was a promising idea. Accordingly, I drafted an email supported by a strong recommendation letter from a senior bureaucrat. In addition, my recommender offered to speak on the phone, as she knew the head of social development personally. I sent my first email followed by a gentle reminder to the lady after a week. However, initially I did not get a response. However, after two months passed, I received an email that said I could “interview” Bella from the Asia division and Indian chapter. I had not asked for this particular interview. Nevertheless, I grabbed the opportunity.

During the interview, Bella did not offer much. When I mentioned my request to shadow a bureaucrat or policy at DFID, Bella told me she was aware of my request but DFID was not comfortable with the idea of me shadowing. She said that the policymaking is a complicated procedure that could not be comprehended by shadowing. In addition, Bella hinted towards the work pressure on the employees that makes it difficult to accommodate a researcher for participant observation. This reflected DFID’s anxiety on giving me access.

Throughout these experiences, I could see patterns of behaviour emerging: ignoring, convincing excuses, delaying, and non-communication, a kind of inhibition or unease, postponement, the excuse of the busyness of DFID bureaucrats.

For one reason or another, DFID's intention to keep me away was obvious. First the 'deliberate cold treatment' meted to me on the part of DFID (i.e. delays in answering back my email or not replying at all); second the so-called reasons of (in) security (?) policies of heavily 'double (security) gated' DFID offices in Whitehall that did not allow 'outsiders' in the inner premises of DFID. No outsider were allowed inside without being accompanied by a DFID attendant (the excuse that was offered to me in the beginning), and therefore not having enough human resource to meet my research request. Thirdly, there was a condition laid that you need to have an appointment to meet someone from inside every single time.

Even if you get an appointment the 'insider' mostly preferred to meet you in the sitting arrangements in the porch where the sofas were arranged on the left-hand side of the main entrance to sit, wait and speak with the outsiders rather than in their office or chamber inside the main building. Hence, it could be said that researcher or non-researcher was welcome till threshold but prohibited from entering the interior. This displayed a contradiction in terms of DFID's internal policy regarding giving access to outsider researchers. It was like saying, "you can come to my home and sit on the porch, but you cannot have the further entry". The porch was the limit of DFID's formal conviviality. They seem to be okay with qualitative interviews of their officials on their own terms but researchers and non-researchers were excluded from entering into the interior of the office building.

During these bouts of failures and successes in acquiring the interviews and access to the physical archives and main office of DFID I realized one thing: an aid organization is like any other formal bureaucratic organisation. And like any other big organization it can mislead the researcher into assuming it is more of a closed system, hence difficult to know,

but it may be as easy or as difficult to know as any other kind of organization or social system (Eyben 2005:2). During my interviews with a couple of researchers who tried to study large organizations like the World Bank and DFID, I found their experience identical with mine. These institutions behaved in similar ways with them as well. I would not use the word ‘lucky’ however, some of them were quite creative and resourceful in their approach probably due to their earlier acquaintances and familiarity with the institutions under study.

### **3.5.3 The satellite ‘think tanks’**

In the aftermath of bitter disappointment from DFID, I started searching for significant alternative venues for participant observation. I was looking for an institution that could enable me to study the multifarious contexts of policy and its related processes in an aid organization. After brainstorming and discussion with a senior researcher, I selected one of the top London based UK aid think-tanks. I was told that this think tank encourages researchers and supports intellectual engagements with policy research. This think tank is well known for its research in development that has influenced the policies and practices of the DFID.

I chose to contact this particular think tank because they were already conducting an independent research project on the policy processes. I emailed Sandy, the director of policy and research. He was a trained anthropologist himself and had been in various positions in the World Bank and DFID prior to joining this think tank. The career trajectories of many of its employees were characterized by their flow in and out of the DFID, World Bank, and other

prominent aid institutions. Later on, I realized that this is one of the important characteristics of the career course of most of the people working in the aid industry.

I did not want to miss this chance, so I secured a recommendation letter to send Sandy from a top social development entrepreneur and a seasoned development practitioner called John. John is a senior and seasoned development practitioner who is well known among development circles for his straightforward and terse style of communication. Importantly, John was a close acquaintance and former colleague of the director of the abovementioned think tank. I wished to seek help in conducting participant observation. Yet it took me two months to get a proper interview with Sandy. Despite an agreed appointment, once Sandy's emergency medical appointment cropped up and another time his personal assistant went on his annual leave without organizing our next appointment. Sandy's personal assistant, Robin, was a peculiar character, seemingly busier than his own superior was. He had an unusual way of communicating the message. First, he will confirm the appointment and then send me an email at the last minute telling me about the exigency or change in plan. If I call him, he would not pick up the phone but will email me for sure. I had no way to understand whether it was mismanagement or an avoiding technique to discourage my advances in the first place. It was frustrating.

Anyway, at last, the perseverance paid off and I got to speak to Sandy. Sandy sounded quite cheerful and was an articulate person. He inquired about my research agenda in a way one wants to confirm what was heard or known about me. In a friendly way, he also asked me about my supervisors and told me about his when he himself was a doctoral student once. Thereafter, he directly addressed the topic of participation observation. In his opinion the

orthodox participant observation would not really work in present building the institution was housed in, 'People are busy and we also don't really own much common space in the down time,' he said. He informed me that 'most of the researchers work here 10 hours a day and they have only a coffee machine. It's not the place you can work around' he informed me. He expressed his concern: "It's more of a contract driven delivery organization, so I can't imagine how you would conduct participant observation." Sandy suggested:

You can do the qualitative interviews and people are happy about that. But orthodox participant observation, to be honest, would be a waste of time. You will spend an awful amount of time looking at people and going up and down in the building.

This friendly warning was a kind of implied denial but not fully. I reiterated earnestly about the importance of the ethnographic touch essential for my research and requested for some way out. I appealed to him indirectly in the name of our disciplinary solidarity. After a while, he came up with the middle solution. He informed me that there are two teams working on two different projects at the time. He suggested that I send an email explaining my research interests with a CV attached so that he can include me in with one of the most relevant teams as an intern. Sandy said, being an intern and working as a part of it will give me an opportunity to understand the 'know how' of the work and office culture more than just through being a passive observer. And he was right. In addition, he warned me, "I will have to ask the teams that if they are comfortable with this arrangement. If not, I won't be able to help." I agreed and promised him to do as he directed and we concluded with parting thanks.

The following day I drafted an email with an updated CV attached and sent it to Sandy. Ten days passed but there was no reply. I sent him a reminder and still received no reply. A month passed, I sent him another reminder, but no response again. I enquired with his personal



assistant, but he was quite too. The second month passed, followed by a kind reminder to no avail. Once again, I was left at bay without any recourse to knowing any confirmed outcome but a bunch of possibilities. However, taking the cue from Sandy's words the near most possibilities hinted towards the potential 'unease' or 'disapproval' on the part of the research teams. Even the second option suggested by Sandy about the qualitative interviews was to no avail. I contacted the relevant leading members of the team individually. Although they were kind enough to reply me and I even spoke to one of them, the meetings or interviews never materialized: the same lame excuses, the same neglect and delays –an implicit exclusion of an outsider researcher. A retrospective perusal of a related email correspondence and notes taken indicate that the work pressure, overall reluctance to be part of research other than their own (despite the common research interest) and a kind of apathy towards young researchers might have been responsible. Interestingly enough, these teams constituted mostly by the development researchers who were trained in anthropology and other social sciences.

I witnessed two extremes of collaboration and exclusion between policy entrepreneurs and think tank researchers who also happened to be social scientists themselves. On one hand, my entry into the core networks and introduction to prominent key informants was facilitated by 'activist-anthropologists' and, on the other hand, some of my own disciplinary kin from development think tank were not happy in accommodating or collaborating with me. Probably the 'anthropological gazers' from 'a contract driven delivery' aid think tank were not comfortable with the idea of themselves to be under the 'anthropological gaze'. Perhaps they just did not want to share their take on 'our' common disciplinary grounds. As I mentioned above, probably 'word of mouth' about me was reaching quicker than my email. However, my exclusion had thinner and subtle connotations than obvious reasons.

In reference to the 'ignoring' by the above-mentioned think tank, a senior civil servant Bill, now based in Thailand, commented:

These think tanks are like a satellite of dominant aid institutions and UK Aid. They revolve around it tethered with the unseen cords of 'intertwined' 'internal and international policies' and policy networks at any given time.

On the one hand, the recommendations and observations by Harry Jones and Mendizabel's (2010) in their report on 'DFID 's learning from its allies, does talk about DFID's formal ties with ODI. However, on the other hand, ODI claims to be an independent think tank on issues of international development. This reminded me of the words of a pioneering policy analyst I met in the past, who hinted towards the phenomenon of strategic political and physical proximity of the office and internal policy deliberately maintained by the London think tank with the main institutions of UK Aid like DFID. Another characteristic being the movement of the bureaucrats, policy makers and development practitioners from one aid institution to another and back. For instance, many of my high profile informants and former employees of DFID had worked in World Bank, and then in DFID and other times in one of the top think-tank or vice-versa. On the one hand, the movement of these officials could be seen as part of their career trajectory, but it actually results in widening of the networks. Moreover, it facilitates the creation of new networks or interest groups, inter-institutional interaction and cross-pollination of ideas across the range of institutions (elaborated in Chapter 4, section I). On the other hand, this explains the correlation and the reasons behind the similar pattern of behaviour meted to me by politicians, DFID, and its satellite think tank. A few more informants with little difference in other contexts repeated the patterns of rejection and the reasons thereof discussed above during my fieldwork (Informants: Ray, Bill, David, Neil, and Harris).

### 3.6 Reluctant civil servants and porous organizations

In the context of my research that sought to look into policy processes within DFID, the political influence of coalition government led by the Conservative Party was weighing heavy. New rules brought in new policies and new terminologies. Out of the dislike for the Labour political ideology, the conceptual frameworks, and policy terms used by Labour in DFID were also changed or replaced. This was augmented by the change in time and relocation of the workplace to the heart of Whitehall, which resulted in a change in the organizational dynamics of the DFID. Despite its autonomous status, DFID was now considerably circumscribed putting its employees under pressure through various check mechanisms like inter-institutional performance checks, public accountability, mandatory briefing, internal reporting as well as reporting and evidence sessions before parliamentary select committees. Now the dominant theme within the UK aids sphere and its efforts to eliminate the world poverty was ‘value for money(aid)’ so the issue of accountability or getting value for each and every penny of UK aid was hanging on the head of the entire DFID bureaucracy ( based on discussion and information noted during fieldwork).

It is in the light of above political changes and developments the following section has to be understood. My ‘non-interviews’ were conducted with a range of DFID bureaucrats, politicians, and development professionals. Here by ‘non-interviews’ I mean the interviews those I could not get to conduct due to various reasons. I have included the most relevant representative examples. This section will elaborate on the information on the potential reasons behind ‘not getting’ to do the interviews.

### 3.6.1 We are talking, but I am not speaking to you!

I was speaking with Linda Janson, a DFID bureaucrat in a quiet corner of a cafe in the crypt of Saint James Church in Piccadilly, London. 'This is not a formal interview, you know? This is an off-record conversation... we are talking, but I am not speaking to you', Linda chuckled. 'You are right,' she said, 'the researcher-friendly and creative work culture of DFID is no more; it is now a closed and inaccessible organization'. Linda expressed her concern:

It is not 'international aid organization' anymore; it has become an 'aid corporation' nowadays. Now 'we' mean serious business, we mean 'value for money'. You know what I mean. This may change with the change in power, for better or worse. Of course, even before, it (DFID) has its own reservations, but it had more freedom and less restriction. We had liberties and more room for expression of ideas and we all knew it, including our superiors. Now we are all under tremendous pressure, work wise, you know! We are accountable to our instant boss as well as to the ministers of our department. Therefore, when you are working in such 'tight' conditions you tend to be in good terms with your (all) bosses, you do not take risks. You do not accept challenges. You feel 'more' responsible for your own long-term 'professional progress. Moreover, you don't do not give 'interviews' you know what I mean? (Fieldwork informant)

Linda's account resonates with the sentiments of several other key informants I interviewed. It was more reflected in the language of DFID under Conservative rule. The language of 'value for money', 'making every penny count', 'making sure every penny is well spent', 'the value of the each penny paid by English taxpayer' in the name of global development and poverty alleviation. This change was reflected more into the common language in its

essence with the policy shift in DFID coalition government<sup>29</sup> (DFID 2011: 4) and later under sole Conservative rule<sup>30</sup> (DFID 2015: 9).

### 3.6.2 'A' political Jim

Jim was a policy and propaganda director at an international development organization. Always meticulously dressed like any showman or TV presenter, he had a streak of an 'actor' or 'skilled stage presenter' about him. The nature of his job made him mostly travel away from his office either teaming up for charity campaigns or collaborating with other aid organizations on policy-related issues all over the world. A former social development advisor introduced me to Jim by virtue of their fieldwork together in India when Jim was working with DFID. Although she referred me to Jim, she intimated me about his self-centred character and least enthusiasm for change or challenge when it comes to going out of the way for 'getting things done'. She said:

We have some colleague those who love the 10 to 5 nature of the job. They like media exposure and authority they get to strut in developing countries by the virtue of their job more rather than the essence of it. He is one of those 'professionals'.

Jim's personal assistant Tina was corresponding with me on his behalf. In answer to my first email seeking an interview with Jim, Tina explained about his tight schedule and assured me that he would reply soon. In the second email, she asked me to give her some more information about the focus of my research, the type of questions so that Jim can go through

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<sup>29</sup> Available on: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/67584/BAR-MAR-summary-document-web.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67584/BAR-MAR-summary-document-web.pdf), Accessed on: 12/11/2015

<sup>30</sup> Available on: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/478834/ODA\\_strategy\\_final\\_web\\_0905.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/478834/ODA_strategy_final_web_0905.pdf), Accessed on 12/11/2015 Accessed on : 12/11/2015

it prior to the interview with me. Therefore, I sent her the information needed, consent forms, and waited for her reply. Tina replied to me after two weeks saying that Jim is going through the material sent by me and as soon as she gets his reply, she will let me know. After a week or two, I received another email from Tina. She informed me that Jim thinks 'he would not be able to shed any light on the policy related question, the probe that seeks to know about the political dimensions of his involvement and side tracking of the social exclusion policy', which implied that I will have to move on. I replied positively with an explanation on the practice of 'anonymity' of informants, researchers have to maintain and hence, even if Jim shares something I would not be disclosing his identity or publish anything without his consent that would harm him. However, as it was reflected from their last reply that Tina and Jim were not convinced. Probably they made up their mind. I received an email from Tina after a month seeking apologies for Jim's inability in finding time to meet me due to his 'immense' pressure of work. Nevertheless, they did not forget to wish me luck for my research endeavours (From fieldwork data).

### **3.6.3 'Busy' consultant Gail Featherstone**

Gail was another key informant/interviewee on my list whom I could not interview or speak to. She is a former civil servant, currently working as an independent development consultant and an innovative thinker. Moreover, she was commissioned to write an evaluation report on a key policy framework of the UK Aid in the past. This made her quite relevant interviewee for my research project. Hence, I was searching for her. However, after she left the civil services and started her own consultancy I could not find her whereabouts. In the first place, I could not get a hold of her current contact details. All those available contacts online were

defunct or not in use. In this situation, one of our common friends who herself is development professional came to help. She had her personal email id. After a couple of emails, Gail replied to me, ‘Sorry! My (consultancy) work in recent times has been much more gender specific and less on wider social exclusion, apart from the obvious overlaps. Please accept my apologies!’ I was persistent. I emailed her back. I said ‘I do understand your situation, but I would be immensely grateful if you could please spare some of your valuable time even discussing the overlaps of topics’. The reply came:

This is coming at a really bad time for me. I have returned from leave, have a huge backlog, and need to prepare for a field trip in 10 days. Therefore, unless you can wait until mid-November, I’m afraid I just will not have time to engage.

I said to myself, ‘Well, I won’t mind. I will wait till November’. November arrived and I sent a reminder email to Gail. However, we were not ‘destined’ to meet. Probably my email reminders were lost in her ‘super-busy’ schedule. Alternatively, avoiding the interview was a necessary kill from her ‘priorities’ point of view.

Months later during an ‘off-record’ discussion with a common friend Peter (a former DFID bureaucrat) I come to know that it was a deliberate ‘pragmatic’ move on the part of Gail. She did not want to involve into the social exclusion chapter again. She did not want to mess up her relationship with the present government or DFID as speaking too critically would have alarmed her colleagues and prospective employers who played a critical role during the ebb of the policy under scrutiny. Her involvement with the current government as a consultant commissioned to work on gender issues in the conflict-ridden areas placed her in the wrong position to discuss the role of the present government in sidetracking the relevant policy

themes and effective frameworks like social exclusion from the broader UK Aid policies to which she was the witness. Gail is a full-time independent development consultant. 'A lady with a chequered career spanning nearly two decades in development industry behind her, 'she knows her moves' Peter reflected. 'She is a creative development practitioner with a wide network of good acquaintances all over and she knows how to maintain them'. 'All over, you mean? I asked, 'I mean all over, from Downing Street to DFID, and the World Bank to European aid organizations' Peter informed me. This was the reason she was not comfortable in agreeing to an interview from the start (Informant Peter).

#### **3.6.4 'Non interviewing' the politicians**

Pierson (1993) in his collective review of three monographs on policy, feedback, and political change argues that 'policy produce the politics, and it is not the other way around' (1993: 595). Quoting E.E. Schattschneider, Pierson remarks that, 'new policies create a new politics, the policy is not the result of political forces' (ibid).

The point I am trying to make here is the inevitable role of political actors and their engagement with the rest of the bureaucracy in implementing or underplaying policy themes and policy frameworks favoured by leading political parties. However, policy or I in no way mean to say that there is no room for manoeuvres and mutual influencing of various stakeholders and actors involved that shape the eventual policy product processes. I am just trying to underline the importance of political actors, and personal and professional factors in the policy processes.



In the following section, I am going to narrate my experiences with political actors while attempting to obtain their interviews. This will shed light on why I decided to pursue them and what was their response to my research endeavour. Overall, I tried to contact four politicians in the course of my fieldwork. My selection criteria were based on the direct or indirect involvement of these political actors with the life course of social exclusion framework and related policy processes in DFID and beyond. I was particularly interested in their collaborative efforts with DFID actors towards implementation or rejection of the above-mentioned policy framework. I was interested in looking at informal efforts and ad hoc teams, which form across networks beyond their immediate working spheres when the objectives and topic of interest coincide.

### **3.6.5 The gentleman MP and the league of yeomen**

I was following a former Labour MP due to his prolonged involvement with the Department for International Development by the virtue of positions held during the timeline of my research topic i.e. the life cycle of the Social Exclusion Policy in DFID. I thought if time permits, I should conduct an oral history interview with him. Not only because he was holding key positions in the Department of International Development at the time, but he also had played an important role in raising questions and political lobbying in British Parliament for the policy on implementation of social exclusion as a DFID policy theme to reduce international poverty (informant Marlyn).

I found his contact details on his personal website. However, I could not contact him online as I did not belong to his constituency. Hence, I decided to call him on the telephone number provided. Out of two landline options, I chose the Westminster line that guaranteed my access to them. On the phone, it was suggested by the attendant on the other side to write an email explaining my research topic and intention. I emailed them accordingly stating my intentions along with a brief introduction to my research topic. The next day I got an abrupt reply from the parliamentary assistant to the MP, 'expressing regrets and seeking apologies due to 'packed diary'.

With due modesty, I replied 'I wonder if there are any possibilities of appointment in the next or next to next month. I would be obliged to have this appointment, even if it is after six months as I have just started my fieldwork'. Within five minutes of my email, I received an answer: 'Apologies, XYZ'. This was one of the most unexpected and most 'terse' replies I have ever received.

After what I was told about the yeoman's service of this MP towards the cause of global poverty alleviation, even if it was in a limited way - I was expecting not only a positive response but also at least half an hour interview from him. As per my information, it was during his third term as Minister and Secretary of State for International Development the above-mentioned MP aided by his Undersecretary teamed up with a senior bureaucrat from DFID to mobilize resources in support of tackling social exclusion, the main impediment in the achieving of MDGs (Millennium Development Goals). This gentleman was not ready to entertain me at all and indeed Harris was a 'gentleman' MP well known for his own keenness towards the maintenance of his 'good' political image as well as his 'good' relations with

opposition party MPs. As per an off-record conversation with an insider, 'the reason behind his reluctance in giving me audience or the interview was somewhere in his cautionary measures and his amiable 'political' personality' that stopped him providing any information about his political opponents. He was not willing to give away any information about his involvement in the abovementioned feat or against his fellow politicians from the opposition or their party's political participation in sidetracking the Social Exclusion Policy. This reminded me of a second email I sent to Harris about my potential interview questions. My questions were focused on as/symmetries of colonial legacies in the personal and professional lives of those dealing with the development industry and the reasons and roles of a new government in the scrapping of the 'well functioning' international development policies launched by the Labour government and his particular take on it.

### **3.6.5 Sam Sayer a politician with a social conscience**

Sam was another MP who implicitly denied me an interview. His classic act of 'activism' of lobbying for the cause of the global poor in British Parliament on behalf of DFID made him of interest to my research. His personal initiative in coordinating with a senior social development practitioner from DFID and proactively achieving the success would have been a star example of my main thesis. As per my informant, 'he was the man of profound social and moral conscience' (informant Marlyn). But to my dismay, he showed reluctance in meeting with me or even giving me any kind of lead in a telephonic interview. He wanted to avoid me by giving the excuse of his extremely busy schedule despite my flexibility about time convenient to him. Most probably, the reasons behind his denial were the same as that of MP Harris. Both of them were professional politicians quite engrossed in active politics. Both were uninterested or unwilling to help a research student at the cost of spilling the beans,

which could go against their personal and professional interests as well as the party interests. There is no doubt that they had an 'activist- ideological' dimension in their personality, which we can derive from their 'noble action' in parliament (informant Marlyn). Probably, because of 'some kind political or commonsensical code of behaviour' they did not want even positively to be recognized for their yeoman service (an off-record conversation with an informant).

### **3.7 Discussion**

The challenges in researching aid organizations are characterized by the positionality, relationships, power and educational status of the researcher, which often limits the extent of their entry and access to aid organizations and insiders (Eyben 2005:1). For the researcher, it is important to consider both what they want to know and why they want to know, as this might bring them into touch with both those who are too protective of the inner working (of the organizations) or those who are the champions of change in the organizations (Crewe and Young 2002:7). While researchers in academia and NGOs often see themselves as championing radical causes, staff within bureaucracies tend to resist fundamental challenges to the status quo (Buchnan-Smith 2003:3, Crewe and Young 2002:7). However, as Eyben (2005:3) observed, and I have experienced during my fieldwork, this can cause internal complexity as "good relations with one set of actors might be detrimental to securing access to another set", which often results in implicit refusal to access or rejections of any initiative by researcher. On the one hand, the administrative and political power invested into the aid institutions may overwhelm the researcher. On the other hand, their position of power and their research aim can give them an advantage over the organization under research. With

men dominating aid organization, most policymaking structures leave different degrees of room for manoeuvre (Crewe 2014).

An overview of the above chapter underlines range of potential analytical engagements with the exclusion meted by its staff or gatekeepers while allowing the research cooperation and the implicit rejections of participant observation and denial of interviews. In the light of circumstantial development and potential explanations of the behaviour of the institutions determined by their individuals, we can underline the roles of formal and informal networks, or the comparative cost (risks) or the stakes involved, work pressure and overarching institutional policies towards the outsider researcher. Here I would like us to bear in mind what Douglas said (1987:9), that “institutions are not living beings, but are inhabited and run by human beings”. Hence, when I say institutions, I mean the people who are dictated by the political and economic ideas entrenched with organizational objectives and philosophies. In addition, those political and economic ideas, in turn, have their origins in the social, political and economic values internalized by individuals who create those institutions or work within the organizations.

The reasons behind the above-mentioned exclusion can be divided into two categories. The first includes the face value of excuses offered and the related actions of the reluctant non-interviewees. The colleague and counterparts of the aid workers who denied me interviews elucidated the second reason. Whereas, the excuses offered by the former indicate the ‘formal’ or ‘political correct’ way of behaviour in everyday social life, the latter later hints towards various factors such as institutional pressure, fear of political repercussions and potential adverse effects on the personal stake.

A noticeable shift was observed in the entire liberal mood of the DFID work culture as an organization, transitioning from relatively open to a closed institution, which is reflected in the institutional approach of DFID. This is also shown in the behaviour of the hierarchy of bureaucrats in the wake of my endeavours to get access to DFID as well as in a major think tank. Moreover, it was visible in the circumscribed movements and actions of its employees and consultants who were under constant check and work pressure that hinted towards the reason behind the reluctance of the non-interviewees (especially those who insisted on keeping their conversation off the record).

Conversely, their counterparts and former colleagues, who candidly spoke to me, were not under the obligations of bureaucratic bounds or responsibility. They were relatively free from any fear of backlash or picking-up by the political establishment. This strength or freedom could be attributed to their retirement status as well as the strength they have gained through their pragmatic insights about the inner working of the development industry. This sentiment was lacking in many of those who denied me an interview and who were in the middle of their careers as development practitioners. Many of them were working independently as development consultants. Although many activists-bureaucrats or consultants had vested interests between DFID and the government, they also held the conviction that this kind of information or research was complimentary for effective policy practices and learning processes of DFID. They suggested that it would eventually enhance the efficiency in development intervention in the general.

The non-interviews by politicians show us their perception of and tendencies towards politically correct behaviour. As the maxim goes, “in politics there are no permanent enemies

and no permanent friends.” By avoiding me, they were avoiding any potential controversy or unease. It also indicated mistrust towards young researchers who might be an academic maverick trying to carve a niche for themselves. It might be said that, as the Labour party was in opposition, any information that might go against the Conservative should benefit the Labour’s claim of giving more efficient government and policies. However, an off-record discussion with an insider who was a private assistant to the top brass of DFID told me, “there is nothing like policy shift, it’s just changing the bottle with same old wine inside”. An informant who was previously a senior bureaucrat at the DFID further confirmed this.

The behaviour of my informants who were mostly development professionals and aid bureaucrats, cannot just be understood alone by their busy schedules, organizational culture, work-pressure, intensive check mechanisms within the organization, or influence of politics in the center. Their behaviour also had strong underpinnings of self-interest, professional survival strategies, or instincts, and cautionary behaviour that springs out of calculated guesses in the competitive workspace. Hence, it could be concluded that the self-interest driven priorities that ensured one’s future professional gains were one of the prominent reasons behind the avoidance of interviews with me. The phenomenon of cooperation among development practitioners trained in anthropology and researchers with a social science background in my research could be analyzed in the following way. The activist anthropologists, development practitioners and policy makers or bureaucrats could be divided into three groups. First, are those who are in office and still co-operated, second are those who were not in the office and co-operated and third who were in office and were unwilling to cooperate. The interviewees belonging to the first category were what could be termed as an activist anthropologist/sociologist type of policy entrepreneurs. The interviewees belonging to the second category were those who had not stake or no fear whatsoever from

the establishment or the institution they once worked with. Those who were in office and did not co-operate did so sometimes due to their work pressure, and sometimes, to avoid any complications in the wake of their sharing information as their stakes of income as the government consultant, politicians and civil servants involved were much bigger than their commitment to research. Some informants denied me interviews and they did so out of fear of potential backlash or simply to stay away from any potential controversy.

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## Chapter 4 How do the (aid) policy themes evolve ?

*'beyond a focus on planning, agencies and governmental or non-governmental interventions, planistrators and peasants, there lies the whole field of policy which does not emanate from such agencies, and is unlikely to be written in policy documents of the type used by such agencies, and has altogether different boundary conditions.'*

*-Apthorpe (1996b:166)*

### Section I. The progression of social exclusion policy framework:

#### A case study

#### 4.1 Policy in the 'air'

Following my rather naive question in the flow of discussion, "where do the policy ideas come from?" Rebecca (informant) raised her head and pretended to sniff in the air. She smilingly replied, "They are in the air, they are all over. The policy ideas come from the air." Puzzled, I asked her, "What do you mean by 'in the air'?" She answered, "Policy themes and ideas are all around us. They are in print media, electronic media, academia, conferences, workshops, market, day to day life; they are everywhere, you name it." Rebecca was quite right about the mundane origin of ideas, in general, and, policy ideas, in particular, prior to

attaining the glamour or buzz in the development industry. Production or initiation of the policy ideas is not limited to the sphere of politicians or policymakers.

However, as Peirson (1993:8) states it, policies are not merely the product of politics; they also produce politics, which, in a circuitous manner, are manifested through policies. Policy themes and policy ideas are converted into analytical or conceptual frameworks before being developed into formal agendas. Hence, policy themes or policy frameworks could be called ‘conductors of policies’. Most likely policy themes and policy ideas can be compared to pollen grains; some floating in the atmosphere, some stuck to the feet of bees, birds, and some into and on the back of flowers, leaves, and blowing in the wind stream. Pursuing this analogy, we can say that like pollen, policy ideas too float into the social, religious, and political spheres, literally every walk of human life. Print media and electronic media are the main catalysts that widen and intensify the movement of these grains of policy ideas, which may be cross-pollinated, transported, and communicated by a range of individuals, networks that themselves are affected by ideological, political, and economic factors (based on discussion with informants Rebecca & Marlyn). It is like Arjun Appadurai's (1998) notion of the ‘social life of things’. Here, we are considering the journey of ideas, and how these ideas become an entity due to various external and underlying factors. Obviously, many ideas may coalesce to produce a thing, such as a framework or a policy, and there are several narratives of these journeys.

In this dissertation, the main points I focus on are based on the evidence available in reports, the literature and from my informants – from French to a wider European context, to the more localized context of the UK and DFID (Department for International Development),

ending with a more global remit. It will be made clear that policies do not evolve in a systematic or linear way, such as (i) identification of problems, (ii) brainstorming, (iii) planning to tackle the problem, (iv) finding solutions, or working out the solution (Shore and Wright 1997:12). The evolution of a policy could be said to be a series of the unpredictable and unpremeditated journey of ideas and concepts originating from mostly unpredictable sources. Neither do the policy themes originate from systematic official-bureaucratic mode of production characterized by the top-bottom flow of ideas and order that culminate into final policy product. However, there are multiple undocumented policy processes in action, which are never spoken or written about in policy literature. This chapter highlights those unofficial processes through the case study of 'social exclusion policy framework, by looking at the undocumented policy practices that shaped the 'social exclusion policy framework' from its origin as conceptual analytical tool to assess 'new form of poverty'.

The evolution of the social exclusion framework (SEF) in DFID is no exception to this. This chapter is based on oral history and semi-structured interviews as well as my archival research conducted in the IDS archives, an online repository of DFID documents, discussion, and correspondence with a French micro-economist along with contemporary civil servants from DFID regarding the origin and evolution of the social exclusion framework.

The concept of social exclusion as an analytical framework was adopted by DFID so as to understand the underlying reasons beneath the failures to reduce chronic poverty from developing countries despite decades of development intervention. Tackling social exclusion was considered an essential first step so as to reduce poverty and remove the significant

obstacles hampering the achievement of MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) (Informants Bella, Marlyn, Rebecca, Gaynor and Watson 2007).

I have divided this chapter into two main sections. The first section describes and discusses the evolution or life course of social exclusion as a policy idea culminating in an aid policy framework and later undergoing dramatic contextual change. The second section highlights the process of framing and de-framing of social exclusion as conceptual-analytical framework in various institutions and under myriad actors. The reason behind dividing this chapter into two sections was essential to conjoin the two logical and intertwined steps that almost every policy framework undergoes. These steps that evolve in real life policy progression and process of policy re-framing are explained and described in this chapter. As the aforementioned exercise warranted elaboration and space, hence I decided to split them into section I and II to keep the consistency and follow the research storyline.

Therefore, the first section sketches the evolution of the social exclusion framework while underlining various twists and turns it took during the journey from a remote countryside parish of France to the corridors of UK aid and international development. The following part deals with the origin of this idea in the small French parish while tracking its role in the European Commission's endeavour to analyze the causes and concept of poverty 'a new'. The second subdivision of this will highlight it with an introduction to the heart of British power in Downing Street by the way of electoral politics, followed by its entry into WDR (World Bank Report) 2000 eventually ending in DFID. However, the non-linearity of SEFs progression and its conceptual evolution shaped, influenced, and appended by a multitude of actors and factors makes it more dramatic journey for this policy framework. This

documentation rather than remaining a mere description of the life cycle of a conceptual framework of policy helps to see and deconstruct the dominant discourse of top-down policy implementation or the presumed monolithic nature of development industry from a realistic angle. Moreover, the practices that produce policies will reveal the evolution of policy framework under study. This research will show how policy ideas are adopted from the wider social-political milieu later to be reproduced and evolved at the hands of policy practitioners rather than some political or bureaucratic caucus.

## **4.2. A brief history of social exclusion as conceptual framework (SEF)**

### **4.2.1. The context of the policy**

I will provide a brief survey of the conceptual origin of SEF and its entry into the environs of Downing Street. The survey will offer insight into the dramatic journey of this celebrated idea that, like many others, has its origins in social movement sprang from uncommon endeavours of common people in everyday life rather than simply the initiative of a bureaucrat sitting in an office. Moreover, this section will map the life course of the social exclusion policy framework in DFID and its international policy context of development endeavour to reduce poverty.

My first impression of ‘social exclusion’ as an analytical term in the context of DFID’s international development intervention was quite simplistic yet logical. I assumed that SEF was specifically devised by DFID to address the social handicaps and marginalization faced by communities who are subjected to caste, religious discrimination, and stigma. My

perception was based on my personal background as an anti-caste activist and a member of the community conventionally considered one of the lowest social rung in the traditional Indian social hierarchy. However, as I started going deeper into my exploratory research about social exclusion policy in general and in the DFID in particular, entirely different picture of the conceptual evolution emerged, offering quite an exemplary sight of how a policy idea come into being. The gradual development of this idea, called social exclusion, is constituted of individual efforts of committed individuals with conviction in their ideologies, visionary politicians; awaken academics, self-motivated development practitioners, activist-social scientists, and people who want to make a difference in day-to-day lives of the poor.

#### **4.2.2 From the humble parish in France**

The unilateral or linear propagation of a policy idea or framework that dominates the common perception of policies in general and development policies employed by certain aid institutions, in particular, is very misleading (Sutton 1999:9, Jones 2009:11). Such a perspective often shows us the tip of the iceberg, concealing a lengthy past and the tumultuous forces underlying the policy process. These processes could be termed as pollination and cross-pollination of ideas, grafting and implanting of concepts, and their adaptation and reformulation in socio-culturally distinct contexts. The journey of social exclusion is one of them. Usually, the credit of the concept 'Les Exclus' (Excluded) is attributed to a French politician Rene Lenoir, who wrote a report on social policy *Les Exclus: Un Francais sur Dix* (Excluded : One French in Ten) while he was Secrétaire d'Etat a l'Action Sociale of the Chirac Government in France. However, the actual father of this concept who inspired Rene was a Polish priest who used this word for his parishioners

excluded from the social mainstream due to various issues. The original concept of social exclusion was part of ATD (literally mean All together for dignity) Quart Monde (Fourth World or Fourth Estate<sup>31</sup>), an anti-poverty association started by a Polish priest, Father Wresinski, in 1957 with destitute families camped in a small impoverished French parish, Noisy-le-Grand. This project transmuted into Church based projects for the marginalized communities later to become known as Mouvement International ATD<sup>32</sup> Quart Monde<sup>33</sup>. The citation of Rene Lenor in this section is in reference to the context of his abovementioned report, written in 1974, as this is the first formalized or documented use of this term and thus could be seen as the formal source of ‘social exclusion’ as a concept.

French General Planning Commission (Commissariat general du Plan) published a number of studies in 1992 and 1993, engaging with the phenomenon of exclusion and social exclusion (Castillo 1994:614). The current Planning Commissioner, Jean-Baptiste de Foucauld influenced social exclusion and several other policies in post-1960s France (Silver 1994:533). Moreover, Foucauld exerted enormous sway on the constitution of France and the post-1960s social and political movements in France. Michael Foucault’s critical, analytical exposition of culture, religion, historical-political and social institutions from France and Europe along with other theorists (Peters and Besley 2014:101-4) ushered what could be described as the postmodern era. Foucault spoke about and analyzed the phenomenon of the social construct that later Bourdieu talked about in terms of symbolic violence (Silver 1994:538). The conceptual formulation of social exclusion that talks about non-economic dimensions of deprivation owe a lot to the Foucauldian analysis of class, state, church, its mechanism and

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<sup>31</sup> On the lines of First estate, Second estate and Third estate. The terms used during the French revolution.

<sup>32</sup> ATD stands for All together for Dignity

<sup>33</sup> Available on <http://www.atd-quartmonde.org/ATD-Quart-Monde-la-memoire-des.html>, Accessed on : 12/08/2014

myriad ways of operations through language, text, and discourses (Burchell et al 1991). These philosophical and theoretical contexts, lead by the ideas of Foucault, of the social exclusion concept was in many ways the outcome of the original French belief in the republican social contract. The idea of the social contract was based on the French notion of solidarity that compelled policy makers and contemporary politicians develop a response to the economic, social, and political crises in the 1980s in France as well as in other European countries (de Haan 1999:15). The concept of social exclusion was rounded enough to cover the varied aspects of 'exclusion' that existed in mainstream society. The policy emanated out of the phenomenon of social exclusion was solution to the growing disappointment and disenchantment out of the failure of postmodern, post-industrial French state. The French policy focus on social exclusion highlighted the problems of unemployment, poverty, and marginalization of the urban masses and the social apathy towards their destitution (Silver 1994). Moreover, SEF (social exclusion framework), on the one hand, drew the philosophical support from the French political and academic circles. This was partially due to French dislike towards what was perceived as an English approach to income-based poverty analysis and solution on deprivation with its association with church-based charity (de Haan 1999:2, Silver 1994 :540-1). On the other hand, the French idea of the Rousseurian republican social contract beneath the overarching notion of solidarity was the motivating force behind the upholding of social exclusion policy in France polity and society (Silver 1994:543).

Ironically, the root idea of *Les Exclus* as a conceptual term before its accommodation in French political discourse had its origin in the church as well. However, the social exclusion framework helped understand the multidimensional and relational aspects of chronic poverty. It helped uncover the causal relations among the different dimensions of deprivation in the form of exclusion from the state protection, family support, and the 'rupturing of social



bonds' (de Haan 2011:7). As Silver (2007:4) puts it, social relations, institutions, and imagined identities of group, belonging constitute the social cohesion, integration, or solidarity, which creates a social bond. Further, social exclusion also prohibits full participation, from social life, denying access to information, resources, sociability, recognition, and identity, attaching self-respect and obstructing the capabilities to achieve personal development (Silver 2007:10). The characteristics of the conceptual framework that underline the non-economic factors underlying marginalization and frequent destitution was preferred in France compared to the traditional dominant income-based analytical framework to analyze poverty and its repercussions.

Later on, the social exclusion concept evolved and become comprehensive from 1970s since its first pronouncement as a policy framework in French political discourse up to the late 1990s. If we comparatively analyze the initial definition of social exclusion and the one used for social exclusion in DFID policy literature it seems that the former looks along with a class of substance abusers, misfits, and delinquents. While the later included the unemployed, the intermittently employed, migrants, and those who would be excluded due to their religious or sexual orientation. It became more comprehensive and became an instrument of integration of even racial and ethnic groups and migrants culminating in the full-fledged Ministry of Urban Affairs, an arm of the French government to fight "urban exclusion" (Linhart 1992 cited in Silver 1994).

### **4.2.3 Social Exclusion Framework in Brussels**

The social exclusion framework got recognition in other European countries through the advance of the European Commission. One of the main reasons behind the SEF getting currency in the European Union (EU) was the reluctance prevalent among its policymakers towards conventional economic analysis of poverty. The dominant conventional analytical paradigm stressed the income-based poverty compared to SEF, which helped reveal the social-cultural and political dimensions of deprivation. The former French president of the European Commission, Jacques Delors, promoted this concept in connection with the poverty programmes of the EU at the beginning of the 1990's (Ziyaadden and Kasi 2009:24). Delors held number of positions earlier in his career. Those positions included serving as the Minister of Economics and Finance (1981-84) in France, the head of the French social affairs department of the General planning committee before being appointed General Secretary for Permanent Training and Social Promotion, and also associate professor at the University of Paris-Dauphine (1974-79) and director of the research centre 'Work and Society'. Equipped with an academic-theoretical base, and practical insights from the offices he held in the upper political echelons in France academia and politics, Delors applied his economic and social understanding of French social problems and solutions to that of European countries while strengthening the European Union. This was concurrently unfolding with series of developments, including the mainstreaming of the notion of the 'social' in the EU in terms of the problems of unemployment and poverty prevalent in Europe in the wake of post-1980s economic and political crises. In 1989, the Commission of the European Communities pronounced its concerns regarding its action program relating to the implementation of the Community Charter of Basic Social rights for Workers (1989). This was followed by the Council of the European Community's decision to establish a medium-term community

action programme concerning the economic and social integration of the economically and socially less privileged groups in society. The Council of the European Communities later resolved to tackle social exclusion, resulting in "Resolution of 29/9/89 on combating social exclusion". In 1990 a survey of Employment in Europe was published by EU, followed by Eurostat Rapid Reports from the Statistical Office of the European Communities produced the data on Inequality and Poverty in Europe (1980-1985).

Inspired by French experiments in 'community observatory', the European community observatory was created in 1990 by the Commission of the European Communities, Directorate General V (Employment, Social Affairs, and Industrial Relations). The first annual report of the European community observatory was published in 1991 by a group of independent experts coordinated by Graham Room from Bath University. Referring to the French example, this report endorsed the utility of observatory as a decentralized social action so as to reveal the developments unfolding at the local level and strategies being adopted by different social actors. The grassroots feedback was supposed to contribute to coherence in policy planning at the national level. The White paper published by European Commission 1993 on *Growth, Competitiveness, Employment* did not overtly speak about or uses the term social exclusion. This was despite an earlier publication by the EU declaring a strong intention to combat social exclusion and to work towards a Europe of solidarity by intensifying the fight against social exclusion and fostering integration (EU's first annual report and study were published on 1991 and 1992 respectively).

Nevertheless, the 'social' element with its issues such as unemployment, non-schooling, and the lack of health facilities started to permeate into day-to-day proceedings of the EU. The

EU, while informing the Council of European Communities and European Parliament concerning its priorities – in the context of the World Summit on Social Development held in Copenhagen from 6-12 March 1995 – decided to promote specific principles and objectives. As the Summit marked the first UN Conference dedicated to the social development, the three themes EU chose to discuss in World Summit were employment, poverty, and social integration. These themes and related objectives were based on principles of human rights and democracy and integration of social and economic policies. The EU objectives were divided into multilateral and bilateral objectives. The EU objectives were shaped by the necessity to widen the social security networks and provide the resources for social development. So as to enable those who are falling out of the mainstream due to the lack of schooling, housing, basic health facilities, jobs and equitable access to the market be included with the gradual development of social protection systems (EU Commission report 1991). The EU objectives had a strong undercurrent of reciprocity behind aid and inter-linkages of international trade regulations along with the obligations of donor and aid recipient countries. The former sought to ensure that the globalization and international trade work for poverty reduction and social development and while the later sought to ensure compliance with ILP agreements on the freedom of association, on child labour and forced labour and facilitation of social integration (EU Commission report 1990a). This was guided by the EU's expectation that the World Trade Organisation would make sure that international trade should contribute to the social development in reference to the inequity within middle-income countries, particularly for women from these countries. Secondly, the EU multilateral objectives anticipated that the policies recommended and financially sponsored by the IMF and World Bank would include social development. Thirdly, the EU sought the guarantee of international free movement of capital within a legal framework so as to help the

development of poor countries and modernization of the East (Council of European Communities 1992).

On the note of bilateral objectives, EU protagonists wanted the World Social Summit (WSS) and its organizing body, the UN, to secure reciprocal undertakings from aid recipient countries to ratify and comply with the above-mentioned multilateral agreements. This was supposed to be done in terms of priorities for job creation and poverty alleviation in cooperation programs for development between the EU and its partners along with including these goals in their domestic policies (WSSD 1995). In addition, the EU prioritized the granting of aid and trade preferences to countries that are serious about social development strategies. It was stated that EU should use its aid and cooperation instruments to support African countries, in particular, to gain a stronger foothold in global trade to promote investment growth. Similar bilateral objectives were advanced for Central and Eastern European countries in transition. Nevertheless, more focus was recommended on the social dimension of development with the push of programmes designed to support the economic and political reforms in these regions (Council of European Communities report 1992).

The growing prominence of the paradigm used to analyze the social causes of chronic poverty and other forms of marginalization faced by a remarkable section of socially excluded overlapped with the mainstreaming of the social development agenda in UN endeavours to address the global poverty. The flow of both ideas and people must be taken into consideration in trying to understand the co-emergence of these phenomena. The movement of policy makers, development practitioners, economists, and senior bureaucrats from within Europe to UN offices in Europe along with the bureaucratic and academic

communication of ideas played a role in the simultaneous emergence. Further, the location of UN offices is another dimension that will help us understand the cross-fertilization of ideas and the emergence of some and the sidetracking of other concepts. The EU and UN knowledge development and management departments and DFID think tanks, particularly in the context of its proactive interference during the WDR 2000, show how the flows of policy themes or policy paradigms are circular and dramatic in their creation. It is also notable that in the late 1980s and early 1990s the EU emerged as one of the major donors of ODA (Official Development Assistance) during, the World Bank as was a trendsetter and key player in international development intervention, and the British Department of International Development underwent a process of organizational change under the New Labour government. This trajectory or the ideography of the policy themes offers a glimpse into the journey of the new social paradigm of poverty analysis in the corridors from national poverty alleviation programme to international development.

The United Nations Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development organized the World Summit on Social Development (WSSD) in Copenhagen in 1995. This was the first major UN conference specifically on social development issues, closely linked to a series of high-level meetings intended to reshape the UN development work<sup>34</sup>. The official introduction of the WSSD Copenhagen declaration, stated a '*groundbreaking*' agreement made with global leaders. This agreement was about their ten commitments to *eradicate absolute poverty by a target date, support full employment, promote social integration, achieve equality, ensure structural adjustment, resource allocation to social development, universal education and primary health care and strengthening cooperation for social development for social development through the UN*. The ten commitments and targets set by the UN to accomplish

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<sup>34</sup> Available on: <http://www.earthsummit2002.org/wssd/wssd/wssdintro.html> Accessed on :19/2/2015

social development on global scale reflects the influence of the on-going social exclusion debate and the mainstreaming of the 'social' into the world of global development that was previously dominated by economic dimensions of poverty analysis in Europe. Clert (1999: 178) argues that WSSD was a key event in the development of social exclusion policy. She summarizes the conclusion of the World summit into policy three themes associated with combating social exclusion: (a) a call for the protection of rights and for more democracy in general (b) respect for differences and value 'diversity' (c) the re-introduction of 'social justice' on to the development agenda, which is consistent with the need to 'reduce poverty'.

The WSSD was followed by papers commissioned by the ILO (International Labour Organization) which emphasized the utility of social exclusion as a relevant conceptual framework and its intensity as a discriminatory phenomenon (Lipton 1996)<sup>35</sup>. This culminated in the formation of Strategies and Tools against social exclusion and Poverty, the global programme (STEP). STEP applied two-pronged policies in relation to social exclusion and related social anomalies. It dealt with the extension of social protection to the excluded and integrated approaches to social inclusion. STEP combined different types of activities including studies and research, the development of methodological tools and reference documents, training, the execution of field projects, technical assistance for the definition and implementation of policies and the development of linkages with various actors. This was carried out within the Social Security Policy and Development Branch of the ILO (Estivill 2003). The WSSD declarations and commitment to the issues of global social development were summarized into the International Development Targets (IDTs), the forerunners of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). However, besides the significant goals of global developments incorporated in World Summit and the IDTs those were transfused into MDGs

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<sup>35</sup> [http://www.ilo.int/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed\\_emp/documents/publication/wcms\\_123434.pdf](http://www.ilo.int/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_123434.pdf)

were partially unfulfilled and had uneven policy impact across developing countries (Sumner and Tiwari 2010:2&13).

#### **4.3.1 Social Exclusion Framework at Downing Street**

The entry of Social exclusion policy into 10 Downing Street is no less dramatic than the development of this idea itself. Long before it became a ‘pet’ policy theme for the Labour government, this concept was adapted out of the serious intention to voice the concerns of those who were out of sight and out of the mind of mainstream politics and policy makers in the Britain. It was also partially the outcome of the brainstorming of Labour leader John Smith and his party think tank. Hence, the British Government's domestic policy of tackling social exclusion to provide social justice has an interesting political context of ‘internal politics’ and informal policy entrepreneurial initiatives behind it.

In the wake of the Labour party's electoral defeat in 1992, there was a lot of work going on in the mid-1990s in order to develop a manifesto for the 1997 elections, which meant to serve as the basis for the creation of a ‘new’ Labour government. John Smith, Labour MP took an initiative in organizing a brainstorming session about the party's defeat and to chalk out the election strategy for ‘new’ Labour (Haddon 2012:3). This was not only to get leverage among the electorate but also to appeal and attract the traditional labour vote bank as well as the ‘new’ middle class that emerged from the working class. It was also mean to account for the fragmented, unorganized working class of British society (Haddon 2012:5). Moreover, given the general aversion of people towards the nomenclature and categorization as poor, the terms



social justice and social exclusion were more palatable in the British context. Hence, the language of social exclusion was applied to mend the gap as well as raise an agenda to "chalk out the renewal strategies for Britain" (IPPR report 1994). This enabled the repositioning of the conventional face of Labour while giving a new dimension to social welfare politics. Thus, Labour and its think tank, under the leadership of late MP John Smith, decided to highlight issues to do with the lack of employment, homelessness, teenage pregnancy and truancy as a matter of social justice (IPPR report 1994). A Commission on Social Justice was appointed to produce a report on poverty and social exclusion in the UK that stressed on the dire need to address poverty and marginalization in British society. Poverty was considered to be the consequent failure of the state to impart social justice and exclude a large chunk of the population from the British society (Haddon 2012:5, IPPR 1994).

John Smith commissioned the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) to produce a report on the state of social justice in Britain. IPPR produced the final report called *Social Justice: Strategies for national renewal* on 10th January 1994 (IPPR 1994). The report was said to have "set out the groundwork for a national strategy to tackle the problems of economic under-performance, social division, and malaise that plague the UK. It has become the classic text in social and welfare policy".<sup>36</sup> This report by the Social Justice Commission was a key element in the thinking of people who wrote the manifesto for the Labour government. This manifesto talked about poverty in the UK as a *social injustice*. It planned and proposed to build renewal strategies for Britain and its underclass to bring them into the national fold. The writers of the report researched and referred the most relevant literature and alluded to the theoretical framework of social exclusion and deprivation that was debated in contemporary

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<sup>36</sup> <http://www.ippr.org/publications/social-justice-strategies-for-national-renewal>

France and Europe in the 1970s and 80s in reference to the issues of poverty then (IPPR 1994:3-5).

On a theoretical level, the Commission report as well as the Labour party manifesto stressed the non-economic factors of deprivation and took into consideration the non-economic based analysis of poverty, highlighting the social, cultural, and political causes of exclusion against the economic criteria applied by the earlier Conservative government (An informant from London-based think tank). Later the sudden death of John Smith in 1994 brought the new leadership of Labour to Tony Blair. However, the Labour manifesto on social justice for people agenda shaped so painstakingly by late John Smith did pay off in the national polls. On top of the disillusionment with Conservative rule, in the subsequent elections in 1997, Labour swept the electorate and came into power with a landslide victory (Haddon 2012:5).

#### **4.3.2 Social exclusion as domestic policy framework in the UK**

The Social Justice Commission played crucial role in introducing social exclusion in Britain's upper policymaking echelons. The setting up of a Commission and its resultant report on "renewal strategies of Britain" were said to have been part of a well-planned attempt on the part of the Labour think tank to attract their traditional voters plus the unorganized lots of Labour supporters (Haddon 2012:4-6). The fragmented mass of labourers away from the organized one that used to be the backbone of Labour needed to be accommodated in Labour's new manifesto. After the formation of the Labour government, Peter Mandleson, a close aide of then Prime Minister Tony Blair, took the initiative in creating a social exclusion unit in the heart of Government in 1997 (Hills and Stewart 2008:11). This step was very

much an attempt to show the genuine commitment of the Labour Party towards its election agenda and promises to the poor section of the nation as much as its labour force.

However, the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) brochure published in 2004 reads, “the SEU was set up by the Prime Minister in December 1997 and was initially part of the Cabinet Office that later on moved over to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in 2002”. The SEU was active till 2004 and was reported to work under the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister, in agreement with ministers, was said to decide the direction of the unit’s work and its specific projects after consultation with officials and stakeholders. The SEU approach was based on preventing social exclusion, ensuring the mainstream service delivery for everyone and reintegration of those people who were seen to have fallen through the net (SEU report 2004<sup>37</sup>). At the same time, there was lots of reporting going on, on poverty and various ways of looking at poverty, including a generational focus on adult, old people and looking at different geographical counts were employed by various think tanks, academia and policy institutes throughout the UK (SEU report 2004). An annual report on poverty in Britain was published which generated a lot of debate about the potential best measures and what kind of labour market interventions would work.

SEU's commitment in tackling social exclusion, primarily through research and the development of projects to deal with social exclusion was reflected in its operational practices, which drew extensively on commissioned research, longitudinal studies and

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<sup>37</sup> Social Exclusion Unit Government media Brochure (2004) Available on: [http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/social\\_exclusion\\_task\\_force/assets/publications\\_1997\\_to\\_2006/seu\\_leaflet.pdf](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/cabinetoffice/social_exclusion_task_force/assets/publications_1997_to_2006/seu_leaflet.pdf)  
Accessed on :20/12/2014

empirical research. Further, the SEU had a number of outreach activities for the socially excluded through collaborations with local authorities, businesses, and the voluntary sector. Within the government, the SEU had close ties with various departmental officials and ministers from within Whitehall aided by appropriate government committees (SEU report 2004).

SEU commissioned or conducted various projects and research. These projects included empirical-statistical studies-surveys of problems like truancy and school exclusion, rough sleeping, teenage pregnancy, and unemployment that go hand in hand resulting in the consequent exclusion of individuals and social groups (SEU report 2004). Since its inception in 1997 till 2004, the SEU published 29 reports on the five above-mentioned major areas.

In 2006 the SEU merged with the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit and thus started being called the Social Exclusion Task Force (SETF). The new Social Exclusion Task Force that was part of the Cabinet aided the government in policy analysis and in offering strategic advice on issues of social exclusion in the light of research conducted by SEU on problems concerning the fallout of groups and communities from safety networks.<sup>38</sup> However, in the wake of a power change at the centre, the SETF was abolished in 2011 by new coalition government i.e. Conservative-Liberal Democrat, and was absorbed into the Cabinet committee on social justice (Hansard /Commons Debates 2011).<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Available on : [http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20090114000528/cabinetoffice.gov.uk/social\\_exclusion\\_task\\_force.aspx](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20090114000528/cabinetoffice.gov.uk/social_exclusion_task_force.aspx), Accessed on 8/11/2014

<sup>39</sup> Available on: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111214/debtext/111214-0001.htm>  
Accessed on 15/11/2014

Later on, this very framework of social exclusion was adopted, internalized, and iterated within the domains of UK Aid, a process that has its own story, as I will show in the next section. In short, it is clear that the origin of the policy or the policy processes of social inclusion are non-linear and chaotic.

#### **4.4.1 Social Exclusion Framework (SEF) in DFID**

The SEF in DFID may be divided into two phases or timelines: first its emergence and framing during 1997- 2000 and second during the period of traction, i.e. 2002 to 2010. These two phases are interrupted by DFID's engagements with the procedures involved in the making of the WDR in 2000, wherein UK aid in general and DFID, in particular, has played a crucial role in influencing the content and theoretical outlook of the World Bank towards global poverty. It was an awareness of UK academia and development practitioners that made it possible for the social paradigm of poverty analysis, i.e. the social exclusion, to make its way into the WDR and eventually into international development endeavours (discussed below under the section 4.5.2).

Policy ideas are all around us, as if they are in the 'air'. They are present in mind, in discussions, in print media, electronic media, conferences, workshops, seminars. They are present as an idea or theme in the minds of various people as per their information, knowledge, disciplinary training convictions, experiences and ideological beliefs that they adhere to or think to be logical, rational and suitable to their situational response to the circumstances they face or react to (Informants Rebecca, Alex, Ray). However, only the ideas

those get consensus, support, and backing from the network of key actors and, well-placed powerful people, are the ones that get traction. For a policy idea to see the daylight or rise to prominence, it needs to have crucial support, consensus, and timely backing by the key actors. In the case of ideas that become policy approaches, policy themes or conceptual frameworks, the full cycle of these processes involve the social dimension of the dialectical process of agreement, disagreement, argument and persuasion on various levels of polity, bureaucracy, academia, literature and media that eventually produce the policy framework, as we shall see in later chapters. In the case of the social exclusion policy or analytical framework in DFID, the very policy approach of social exclusion has undergone similar processes, which is the focus of the following section. (Informants Rebecca, Alex, Ray).

One of the informants who had a career spanning a quarter of a century in the international development industry, its various think tanks and academia in the UK and Europe – shared his perspectives based on his first-hand experiences in the development industry with me. He is an economist by training, but a convert to an interdisciplinary understanding of the dynamics of poverty, policy analysis, and analytical paradigms. He was, you could say, the social development (policy) entrepreneur type of person. While talking about his take on British domestic and international development policy, he said:

While working with DFID, I have always emphasized that the British government should have a consistent policy across its domestic and international aid sphere. You cannot put development in a completely different box; it has to have links with what is happening in the donor country (informant John).

His (informant John's) stand was based on his pragmatic way of "comparisons of circumstances, societies, connections of ideas and convergence of themes", ideas, paradigms, and networks and individuals, all put to use by him for through his passion for international development and policy work. His *modus operandi* and informal efforts become instrumental in introducing the conceptual framework of social exclusion to DFID.

#### **4.4.2 The Cinderella department**

Other than the intellectual and pro-active policy contributions from social development advisors, the launch of the Social Exclusion Framework in DFID is characterized by the influential regime and maverick *modus operandi* of the lady cabinet minister for international development who was perceived as "strict, strong and principled" amongst contemporary DFID bureaucrats. Among other things, the minister was very serious about DFID's commitment to the achievement of International Development Targets (IDTs), which she made very clear to the DFID officials from her first day in office. A remark on the chemistry between the minister and DFID bureaucracy by a Governance advisor is quite telling: "The (DFID) people full well knew what their minister wants from them and the minister was astute enough to understand who can do what".

Interestingly, during the distribution of departments in the aftermath of the election victory, the minister was not very happy that the "international development department" was assigned to her. According to one of my informants, she wished to have something that was perceived to be more important and substantial. However, on the advice of her female counterpart from the opposition, who persuaded her that "she can contribute more

substantially to global poverty alleviation”, Therefore the minister agreed to take on the DFID. “This lady minister meant serious business,” as a governance advisor for DFID, told me. “There was a good combination with the minister and its newly formed autonomous department that reflected the changing moods of UK aid,” he added. Nevertheless, among the ‘top’ political people in her party and as well as seasoned mandarins, DFID was considered “the Cinderella department”. Whether it was tongue-in-cheek English humour, gender bias or the playing out of machismo, power, and politics- it is still open for analysis and interpretation (Marlyn). Hence, the ‘fairy mother’ i.e. the patron minister, with their chief social development advisor and an increasingly large number cadre of social scientists, were determined to make a difference in international development.

#### **4.5 WDR 2000 and the DFID politics behind influencing the World Bank**

The story behind the making of World Development Report (2000) has an important message for understanding the progression and trajectory of the social exclusion framework. The evolution and progression of the social exclusion framework are parallel to the paradigm change in the policies, practices and the architecture of UK aid as well as World Development reports. Moreover, it also gives us an idea of how much the social exclusion framework influenced or shaped the WDR in terms of imparting the analytical framework to understand the underlying causes of chronic poverty and relevant solutions thereupon. The WDR, and its making and active involvement of DFID in it, overtook the attention from social exclusion that was resonating in the corridors of Downing Street and DFID. However, the fact remains that the European Commission was one of the active participants in the debate on the role of the social exclusion framework in understanding the marginalization of



certain groups. The European Commission had also submitted a memorandum to the World Summit on Social Development (WSSD 1995). This will help us to understand the movement of ideas like water that finds its ways through creeks and cracks. In this case, the idea found its ways through, various channels of networks and organizations through its communications, interactions, and voluntary attempts to coordinate.

The importance of the DFID's role lies in influencing institutions, like the World Bank, that have been trendsetters in terms of international trade, finance, development cooperation and the production and management of development knowledge. This entire episode reveals to us the processes of harmonization of UK aid with the broader policy priorities of the World Bank and United Nations while influencing the philosophical and paradigmatic core of poverty related ideas dominant in the World Bank (informant Alex). Nevertheless, it shows us the foresight of the UK aid in general and particularly DFID's proactive initiative in influencing the thought processes in the World Bank and the International aid community by contributing to the very analysis of global poverty and its causes. The role played by English development practitioners and development experts in forging new ways of development cooperation is what could be called 'the new aid agenda' (King and McGrath 2004:4). Also, this move of DFID to mobilize its human and economic resources to influence the WDR has had long lasting effects on the following decade of international development aid. It was an astute and pragmatic investment that no other European country foresaw (informant Alex). The paradigm changes that took place in international aid were characterized by the development, co-operation, and formulation of six international development targets, along with a new architecture of donor coordination. This was done under the auspices of the

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) that called for the harmonization of aid (King and McGrath 2004: 2, Eyben 2002).

#### **4.5.1 The World Bank and WDR**

The World Bank is one of the 70 years old twin organizations fathered by the Bretton Woods conference. Its purpose was to regulate the world economy in the wake of the global economic slump following the Second World War. The World Bank today has expanded from a single institution to a cognate associated group of five-development institution. The World Bank, originally called the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, started as a facilitator of post-war reconstruction and development, and fared well till the present times with one of its current key objectives of global poverty alleviation<sup>40</sup> (World Bank Online archives). The World Bank, with its headquarters in Washington, DC, works in close coordination with its ancillaries, such as the International Development Association, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the Multilateral Guarantee Agency (MIGA), and the International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID)<sup>41</sup>.

The World Bank has undergone many changes organizationally as well as operationally since its inception. However, from the point of view of a change in objectives the key transformations came under the presidency of the former US Defence Secretary, McNamara, in 1968 when the “war against poverty” became a slogan of the World Bank (Kenneth and

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<sup>40</sup> Available on : <http://www.worldbank.org/en/about/history> Accessed on 11/08/2014

<sup>41</sup> Available on: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/about/history> Accessed on 11/08/2014

McGrath 2004:20). Other changes took place in 1996 when the then President James Wolfensohn announced a change in the way the Bank would accomplish its mission of reducing world poverty by being a knowledge bank rather than a financial institution (Cohen and Laporte 2004:1). It is argued that this was done to uphold the waning importance of the World Bank as a donor institution while dependent countries looked for better options and some recipient countries turned into donors themselves (informant David).

However, the importance of the World Bank in the field of global development or global poverty alleviation is indisputable. From a conventional perspective, the World Bank and the IMF are deemed as the key arbiters of authoritative information on development-related knowledge. The data produced by the flow of information in these institutions provides information for research in development establishments all over the world ensuring the control and regulation of the development knowledge (Harper 1998:10). The knowledge production international institutes like IMF also annually produces the topic wise statistical reports and papers, training, and workshop aiding development research in development institutions, academia and non-academic research institutions (Harper 1998:142-50). These institutions also work on the paradigm of maintenance for the legitimizing of neo-liberal reforms and ideas for poverty eradication (Broad 2007:702).

As per the Open Knowledge Repository website run by the World Bank Group, the World Bank's World Development Report (WDR) is published annually since 1978. The report collates and analyses the economic, social, and environmental state of the world in the timeframe of any given year. Generally, these reports provide in-depth analysis and policy recommendations on specific and important aspects of development including agriculture, the role of the state, transition economies, infrastructure, health, and poverty. A range of

multilateral and bilateral international organizations, national governments, scholars, researchers, civil society networks and policymakers use it to aid their decision-making processes and consolidate their study conclusions on global poverty (OKR 2014).

The financial clout of the World Bank as a leading donor and globally-leading think tank means that it holds a special position in the international development industry. This privileged position is maintained, through World Bank's power to define and interpret terms, concepts, issues, and phenomenon dealing with international development strategies and analysis. This entails that World Bank publications are taken seriously, and that all other institutions need to take its terms and terminologies to be the yardstick for the rest of the development industry (Jakobit 1999:5) This 'development speak' and its jargons do not exist independently. They are conceptualized and polished in the think tanks of the World Bank. Development literature replete with these terms and terminology is its playground. The policy literature, occasional white papers, and WDR are its vehicle that disseminates and circulate ideas among the inhabitants of the "aidland" (Apthorpe 2011:2). Aidland is an allegorical term for the "much wider form of development industry" employed by Apthorpe (Mosse 2011:2). This phenomenon culminates in the World Bank's procedure what Broad (2007:700) calls the knowledge management or knowledge administration.

The entire knowledge management enterprise of the World Bank falls under the broader practice and praxis of "normative administration or paradigm maintenance" (Broad 2007:706). The politics of normative administration or knowledge management can be understood from a Foucauldian perspective. Moreover, DFID's efforts to influence the WDR

could shed light on the usage of literature and discourses of global poverty and poverty alleviation as a device to exert power and regulate entire aid industry. As Cornwall and Eade (2010:1) observe, “the function of newly coined terms like social capital and buzzwords is to sustain, legitimize, and justify the policy disguising the political-institutional agendas of international development institutions” (Harrison 2010 : 257). The following story and developments shared by some of the key informants and insiders of WDR sheds light on the formal and not so formal circulation of ideas and movements of people. As Mary Douglas argues: "its people in institutions those who talk, act and react, not the institutions. Institutions cannot have minds of their own" (1987: 9).

#### **4.5.2 Social Exclusion framework in the World Bank**

The World Development Report (WDR) is an annual World Bank report, which aims to chart the current thinking on an aspect of global development. This report highlights one topic in each issue from the development field while providing specific indicators of world development on issues such as global health, education, gender inequality, or poverty. Poverty has become a recurring theme at the beginning of each decade since 1980. Even the WDR 2000/2001 was focussed on ‘*Attacking Poverty*’ (WDR 1999).

The WDR 2000, which is also called Poverty WDR, broke new grounds in many respects. It engaged scholars, experts and social scientists outside the World Bank while preparing the report. The WDR team was commissioned two years prior to when the report was due, during which a number of background papers were produced from a variety of external organizations and thinks tanks. Meetings, workshops, and seminars were held across the

world so as to contribute to the report. Electronic platforms, such as the internet, were used to discuss directly with thousands of poor men and women from all over the world in an attempt to understand real-world development measures based on people's lived experiences and livelihood strategies, an exercise never done before on this level in any international development enterprise (analysis based on literature review and archive research). DFID, with its think tank and institutes like IDS and New Policy Institute, joined hands with the World Bank to record the online testimonies of poor people as well as to provide expertise on poverty. Its then director Ravi Kanbur insisted that the empirical pieces of evidence and real life testimonies of the poverty-ridden made sure the team members of WDR conduct the field trips to accumulate first-hand information during the preparatory period (informant Alex).

Moreover, WDR 2000 was controversial because of the team director, Ravi Kanbur, resigned after its publication, citing personal reservations regarding the emphasis of the main messages of the Report (Wade 2001). The report was an outcome of massive direct communication and discussions with thousands of poor men and women from 60 countries, with researchers reaching out to first-hand testimonies in the poverty-stricken regions of the world (informant Alex). As Diane E. Ray<sup>42</sup> notes:

Research for the WDR went beyond the walls of the World Bank, beginning with discussions with more than 60,000 poor women and men in 60 countries, in order to understand poverty from the perspective of the poor themselves. In 1999, a three-month electronic discussion took place regarding the main themes of the WDR. In January 2000, a consultation draft was

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<sup>42</sup> <http://www.worldhunger.org/articles/books/ray.htm> The reasons thereof were also published in his presentation (Kanbur 2001) that highlighted the 'nature of disagreements on the economic policy, distribution, and poverty' fundamental to the World Bank's analytical frameworks as a finance institution (Wade 2001).

posted on the World Bank's website, and a month-long public electronic discussion of the draft followed.

In London DFID with its think tank, IDS and institutes like and New Policy Institute joined hands with the World Bank in recording the online testimonies of poor people as well as to provide expertise on poverty-related propositions to be included in WDR 2000. The online web page on WDR 2000-1 was set up to facilitate e-conferencing, evidence presentation, testimonies and discussion on WDR 2000 first time in the history of WDR preparation.

The World Development Report 2000, which is also called Poverty WDR, broke new grounds in many respects. This WDR was the first to completely focus on 'attacking the (global) poverty' rather than mixing other social issues and agendas. It was different in terms of engaging scholars, experts, and social scientists beyond the World Bank while preparing the report. It was significant in terms of using the information technology for gathering the data and evidence and for mainstreaming the social-analytical paradigm into the World Bank that was dominated by paradigms of economic –statistical analysis. The WDR groundwork was complemented by the use of the internet for e-conferencing by virtual face-to-face meeting between the WDR team, poor people, activists, and grassroots volunteers from around the world. The WDR team was commissioned two years prior to the due report, during which a number of background papers were produced from the variety of external organizations and thinks tanks. Meetings, workshops, and seminars were held across the world so as to contribute to the report. The team director Cornell professor and economist Ravi Kanbur insisted that the empirical evidence and real-life testimonies of people from poverty-ridden communities are must. He personally looked into the matter to make sure that

the team members of WDR should conduct the field trips to impoverished areas of the globe to accumulate first-hand information during the preparatory period (informant Alex).

However, the involvement of the aid organizations, scholars, and experts other than World Bank worked both ways. This involvement influenced the WDR and other stakeholders ideologically, strategically, and technically eventually contributing to the broader spectrum of the aid paradigm. This mutual process of influencing shaped the aid industry not only in the following decade from the perspective of development objectives, but also in the ways that it understood the non-economical causes of poverty. Economic analysis as the dominant paradigm to understand the root causes of poverty was to large extent overwhelmed by a social analytical paradigm – that is to say, the class-based analysis faded from the picture (analysis based on discussion with related informants).

‘Kanbur, formerly the Chief Economist of the Africa region for the World Bank and Cornell professor, was brought in to lead the WDR team by Chief Economist Joseph Stiglitz. However, during this period in the 1990s, DFID itself was undergoing major organizational and international policy level changes. DFID took this opportunity to mobilize its intellectual and economic resources for influencing the WDR 2000-1. DFID was far more successful in its timely move and foresight compared to German, the French and Dutch donor organization (informant Alex).’ Through its Trust fund, DFID invested in organizing and co-sponsoring conferences, seminars and workshops on poverty, social exclusion, poverty paradigms, all while tactfully reiterating and embedding DFID’s take on poverty analysis in ongoing WDR discussions and debates ( Alex). In addition, DFID co-sponsored conferences with SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies), the University of Sussex, and the University of



Oxford. It also joined hands with London-based and other think tanks throughout the UK to achieve its objective to influence the WDR. These conferences and seminars tried to collaborate with the WDR so as to contribute its ideas, understanding and root causes of the poverty (Informant Alex and Larry). DFID's take on non-economic factors of poverty was one of the major contributions to the WDR. The significance of this analytical framework to understand the structural and political factors underlying poverty were akin similar to the one of social exclusion. This concept included non-economic factors and causes such as social status, location, cultural attributes, the social discourse of deviance and marginalization aggrieved by their discrimination and exclusion due to age, addiction, sexual orientation and religious or ethnic identity etc. This is reflected in the WDR Report 2000 at its very beginning as the key objectives or three pillars of poverty alleviation are deemed to be an opportunity, empowerment, and security of poor people (WDR 1999).

The WDR "influencing campaign" was run by DFID in coordination with its think tanks and social policy entrepreneurs. These efforts were spear headed by DFID through Ravi Kanbur, a former World Bank economist, to include the 'social structural' dimensions of poverty in the WDR. Although the degree of mutual effect was not equal and World Bank was influenced more than the DFID was influenced in return, this complete exercise was not one sided. It had mutual effects. Not only the World Bank knowledge processes were influenced by DFID but at same time, the UK government also tried to accommodate and attune with the broader social agenda of the WSS and UN(refer to section 4.9). On the one hand, before WDR 2000 the flow of information, the regulations and control of development industry seem to be a top-down or linear process. On the other hand, this entire episode also signifies the paradigmatic harmonization, the "harmonization of development knowledge, production

and management" and dissemination processes within and outside the World Bank. Nevertheless, this process was later claimed to aid the effective processes of aid delivery, which results from alignment and mutual accountability across its subsidiaries like DFID, OECD, SEDA, and recipient countries. (Paris declaration 2005:11:12). However, in the later case, a holistic picture does not hint towards the top-down influence or the flow of "knowledge as power" as Foucault perceives it (Gordon 1980:104-108). What I mean to say is in the later case the World Bank as the international dominant economic institute seems to be influenced by an English aid institution and its coterie.

DFID was successful in contributing and influencing the WDR from the point of view of the theoretical framework of poverty analysis, inclusion of poverty indicators and alleviation parameters in the WDR 2000. In this episode development practitioners, from DFID and poverty analysts-anthropologists from IDS played a very important role. This could be viewed as the classic act of policy entrepreneurship as well as social development, diplomacy that I will further discuss in the following sections.

#### **4.5.3 The second traction to SEF in DFID**

The second phase of the SEF (social exclusion framework) in DFID started in 2002. This phase was initiated by the arrival of Marlyn (informant), a new social development advisor (SDA) in the Asian divisional desk in DFID, with prior work experience in South Asia.

While working with DFID Marlyn regularly received letters and emails from civil society organizations, activists, and NGOs working for communities suffering from the caste discrimination. In light of her experience and communication with grassroots activists from India, she started brainstorming on the repercussions of caste-based discrimination on the issues of women's health and mortality in South Asia in general and India in particular. The proactive efforts of Marlyn not only gave a new lease of life to SEF but also set a classic example of successful policy entrepreneurship within DFID that blended an anthropologist-activist and civil servant in one.

Social exclusion as it was established on the empirical grounds by some key researchers (de Haan 2011:2) was a pragmatic policy framework that did not withstand the political notions or limits of the development interventions in recipient countries. The new government found it politically problematic. Social exclusion as a key policy framework was in use till 2010. Later on with shift in the power and the accession of the coalition government led by the Conservative party, this conceptual framework was sidetracked and kept on back stove. An off record discussion with an insider from DIFD offered an interesting perspective on how the politics of policy changes. In answer to my question, "why was the social exclusion framework replaced by newly elected government," he replied,

"No, the content of the policy remains same; it is only the name that has been changed; now the focus is on gender rather than the 'poor.'. It is not more than a symbolic change. It was a kind of ritualistic change after the accession of the new government. Earlier 'social-economic' policy was replaced with the policy of development through economic growth and market reforms..."

This information did not come as surprise to me, but it did highlight the 'complementary' phenomenon of framing, reframing and replacing of the concepts and the policy frames from development industry that goes on year after year so as to procure the rationale for

‘development intervention’ or the purpose of life to ‘development industry’. This is how the concepts like empowerment, sustainability, participation and social cohesion become buzzwords and fuzzwords giving new lease of life to the mission development ( Cornwall and Eade 2010: 2-6)

## **4.6 Discussion**

Discussion in the section above has tried to lay out the map of the ‘life course’ of the social exclusion policy framework in the UK. In this attempt, while it explored the origin of this concept, it has also tried to chalk out the ideological and political evolution of this analytical concept in Europe in terms of its trajectory from a humble French parish to the corridors of international aid in the World Bank.

The dramatic journey of this policy theme can be couched in the theoretical propositions of Appadurai (1984) who perceives the ‘social life of things’ through the movement of ‘value’ they are invested with. It can be safely said that the life course of social exclusion is nothing but ‘social life of an idea’ that underwent many theoretical changes with its progression from national to international level, eventually to get enriched in its multifarious content and context.

However, this entire exercise offers us with finding that would help to clear a couple of misconceptions regarding the dominant discourse around the origin and formation of policy concepts in general and aid policy ideas or concepts in particular. In addition, this study also

sheds light on common notion around policy formation in the bureaucratic institutions. The general perception or dominant discourse around the origin of policy ideas and policy-making processes presumes that it is a linear and top-down evolutionary process in bureaucratic setting, where few people on the top decide and determine what later becomes a policy.

On the contrary, in reference to the life course of DFID's social exclusion policy framework above section shows that this policy idea had quite mundane origin in everyday life or social movements in French village. In addition, this policy concept was continuously framed and reframed by multitude of intermediary actors and epistemic communities from aid bureaucracy and beyond as per their ideological and political convictions. Nevertheless, on every new geographical and institutional level myriad social, political, and cultural factors influenced and moulded this policy framework to meet the new requirements in new contexts of international development.

How the social exclusion concept was de-framed and re-framed with every new geo-political contexts and institutional requirements will be discusses in section below.

## **Section II: The framing and de-framing of Social Exclusion framework**

### **4.7 Policy theme as a “frame” work**

Ray was the third person I interviewed after I completed my archival research at the IDS library. Like many of my key informants, he is an eminent development professional. He works as an independent consultant, visiting professor, and keynote speaker for workshops and seminars on aid policy analysis all over the world. Despite his retirement, due to his prior engagements, I could only get hold of him after a year since I first contacted him. I got his appointment in the month of November 2013. We decided to meet at the School of Oriental and South African Studies (SOAS) common meeting room. After the formal introduction of self and my (working) research agenda, in a naive attempt to impress him, I blurted out, “In light of my desk research so far I can see the emergence of policy themes, and analytical approaches to poverty precede the framing part of the policy”. I meant to say, “...precede the knowledge dissemination part”. In response, Ray looked a bit amused. He repeated the word “precedes” with a questioning look on his face and said, “The frames do not precede the policy ideas. On the contrary, the policy ideas come out of from the frames themselves. May not be explicit, but everything comes from frames, stays within frames and is reframed. Framing is a continuous inescapable process. He stressed.”

I was little embarrassed and dumbstruck for a moment. In an attempt to regain my poise, I asked him, “Would you please simplify what is the policy frame?” He directed his finger towards a painting hung on a nearby wall and said to me:

Look at it; it’s like the frame of portrait over there, when you look at it, it shows us a picture. It focuses on the picture. But while looking at *that* picture what it omits or what it keeps out of our mind is the rest of the wall, the other pictures, the windows, the tapestry the decoration on the ceiling and all the entire room that is a common room in this university. However, the other things that the frame excludes, due to the focus on the framed picture, are pertinent to understand the wider context of the picture itself. So this is the way of looking at while analyzing the policy ideas or policy approaches or frameworks.

He was right. I thought out loud, "If we say the policy doesn't come from framing we are nipping the processes of understanding in its bud." Moreover, as Ray said to me, “the point there is not to stop the process, but to go with it... and to see where it comes from.” Furthermore, he indirectly suggested that I should look at the policy objective or what the conceptual framework of the policy wants to achieve. He said, for policy analysis, we should always ask for what purpose. Why was there an emphasis on poverty alleviation or in my case social exclusion? What else does it hide? It was quite an instructive and illuminating moment. I promptly added an important note in the "wisdom" section of my heuristic notes.

#### **4.7.1 Overview of the section II**

This section situated within the literature on the ethnography of communication aims to analyze the processes of framing policy themes within the policy and research division of aid

bureaucracy. Whereas the first half of this section is dedicated to non-formal dimensions of policy framing in reference to four cases, the second half engages with the critical discursive exercise of naming and framing the policy with the help of analytical (CDA) devices.<sup>43</sup> While the first part sheds light on how the variously positioned actors frame the policies according to their pressing priorities in reference to the context of the four narratives, the second part attempts to de-frame the social exclusion policy framework using two representative conceptual definitions of social exclusion frameworks.

The intention behind this entire exercise is to go beyond the formal frame of the policy and deconstruct not only the policy practices but also the policy framework that was used to rationalize the development intervention at different times. For this purpose, I have selected two definitions of social exclusion in the course of its transition. While the four narratives illustrate various extra-official processes of policy framing and the de-framing the two representative definitions of social exclusion framework shall decode or unpick the policy frame. Here the first is the original French definition and the second one is most recent definition, used by the DFID during its international development policy intervention for poverty eradication. The reason behind choosing these two definitions was their different political, social, and spatial contexts that allowed me to assess the alteration and expansion in the nuances of the concept in different contexts. These two definitions are also representative definitions that will help us to juxtapose the changes that meted to the definitions while applying the same concept in the national and international context. In the national-regional context, as the French social-analytical policy concept was employed to deal with internal

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<sup>43</sup> This is partially a linguistic analysis of selected text hence the linguistic analytical devices are applied towards that end to de-frame the social exclusion policy framework



poverty induced by the processes of social exclusion, and second as DFID's policy framework was used to tackle poverty on the international level.

This exercise aims to decode and deconstruct the “development speak”, as Cornwall and Eade (2010: viii) denotes it to signify the lingua franca of development or “language used to compose” the policy framework. In a nutshell, this section exemplifies the processes of framing the policy in the everyday life of aid bureaucracy. In addition, it decodes the policy frame with the help of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This chapter argues that the specific and esoteric use of language legitimizes the development interventions, while, the final content of the policy is resultant of contentions, negotiations, and consensus formation on policy themes, among distinct actors in different political, social entrepreneurial scenarios.

#### **4.7.2 What is framing and naming?**

In aid policy formation, framing and naming are complementary processes. Specific terms, processes, issues, and phenomenon are picked up for attention and named in such a way in order to fit the frame constructed for the particular situation. The combination of these processes constructs the issues of framing and naming the social problem in a new light. However, new descriptions of problem do not come as a part of the solution to the earlier problem, but they evolve independently as new characteristic of situations that come into prominence (Apthorpe 1996:24).

To verify the above-mentioned phenomenon, Apthorpe suggests that, "the emancipatory reading of development discourses requires the re-framing, re-reading, re-numbering, and re-coding of terms and terminologies in hand" (Apthorpe 1996: 18-19). To use this approach would necessitate deconstructing the conceptual framework of social exclusion.

In the present case of the social exclusion conceptual framework, the CDA will help us to take into consideration, beforehand, the political developments and social processes within DFID and prior to the emergence of the social exclusion framework. Social exclusion as a conceptual framework is the product of an overarching paradigmatic shift and the theoretical challenge posed by social-anthropological approaches. The multi-level advocacy of the social-analytical supporters in, DFID in the wake of the Labour government's anti-poverty programmes, on the lines of their election manifesto, created a positive environment for the flourishing of this approach. Even in the broader European context, in terms of poverty reduction programs, the economic approach for poverty analysis and social policy was receiving growing criticism. This was because the rigid economic approaches predominantly attributed the causes of endemic poverty to income-based poverty (pers. comm. with informant David, Arthur) rather than a broader yet deeper sociological understanding of poverty.

In addition, in those days, DFID bureaucrats, called Social Development Advisors (SDAs), were strategically mainstreaming the social into international development (Eyben, 2003:879-80). Wherever opportunity arose, they were propounding the importance of looking at the political and structural causes of the poverty. These SDAs argued that the non-economic, social, and structural factors, rather than mere economic factors, are causing poverty

(informant Rebecca, David, and Judith). Also the emergence of the social exclusion framework in the UK aid coincided with the growing influence of bureaucrats trained in social sciences in DFID, which was until then dominated by economists of all hue and colour, who would move between IMF (International Monetary Fund), WB (World Bank) and DFID (Rebecca, Marlyn, Ray). However, once the social exclusion framework received traction in DFID, the complex procedure of “framing” discourse around social exclusion began.

In the light of the theoretical discussion above, it would be relevant to look at what the findings tell us about the role of political, institutional factors and development professionals as actors have played in shaping, influencing, and framing the framework of social exclusion in the everyday life of DFID. A brief overview given in the section below shed light on the political and institutional changes that DFID was undergoing and how these changes influenced and shaped its work culture. Three narratives follow this observation on everyday life processes of policy framing in DFID by key informants.

#### **4.8 The changes that shaped present DFID**

As one of the key informants stated it, “It was in the late 1990s when the organizational and bureaucratic set up by the UK aid was undergoing a major change.” The ODA that earlier used to provide technical assistance and expertise to the developing countries by sending trained human resources was now transformed into a full-fledged autonomous institution, namely the Department for International Development. Moreover, Labour coming into power

after 18 years of conservative rule characterized this period. With an increase in autonomy, the quality and quantity of UK aid to the poor country were also enhanced and increased. Another important change that took place was the vigorous mainstreaming of the “social” paradigm of analysis into the DFID. This was started on a small level, even before the fall of the conservative government in the centre under the Chief Social Development Advisor. At that point, international development was not in the centre stage of politics as it was seen as less relevant or important and hence there was no scrutiny or restrictions, hence more freedom for innovation. This worked to the benefit of those who had a social entrepreneurial spirit. There was a lot more scope for idiosyncratic DFID bureaucrats with social development entrepreneurial zeal, like Rebecca. However, there was lot more scope for different ideas within DFID than ODA (informants). The factor of “less importance” of ODA gave more freedom to those who wanted to contribute to social causes. The entire institution was much less hierarchical. Rebecca had a small group of SDAs at her disposal who were committed to giving preference to social analytical methods of poverty analysis and development interventions. Moreover, Labour government’s coming to power was a positive change for Chief Development advisor and other lady SDAs, now instead of being considered “Miss Dalit” or, “Mrs. Marginal,”<sup>44</sup> they were seen as important to the whole aid agenda. To begin with, this change put social development in the center. The number of SDAs was growing in DFID and its various chapters all over the world. The first White paper written after the 1997 election on the topic of international development had lots of input from these SDAs all over the world, including the then Chief SDA. This change was concerning the prevalence of gender issues in development and flow of aid channelled towards a project on gender in development. This laid the groundwork for social exclusion as a framework to enter in DFID (fieldwork informant).

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<sup>44</sup> Mrs. Marginal was a nickname given to a Social Development Advisor because of her concerns for the marginalized and socially excluded communities compared to poor in general among her counterparts in DFID.

As this narrative informs us, the UK aid was not only undergoing political but inter and intra-institutional changes. These changes were directly and indirectly triggered by the broader paradigmatic changes in the field of poverty analysis. On the note of paradigmatic change or transition, it would be relevant to discuss the broader post-modern, geopolitical developments that resulted in the contemporary political-social repercussions. These political-social and economic repercussions were related to the disenchantment of people with the possibility of a welfare state, and the response to this was especially felt in intermediate and lower strata societies across Europe and Globe (Gardner and Lewis 1996:1-3). The academics, intellectuals, researchers, sociologists, economists and contemporary critics from the mainstream regimes of knowledge were also critical and looking for theoretically and empirically sound analytical conceptual framework of poverty analysis all over European think tanks and academia (Room 1995:3-4). The policy entrepreneurs and researchers from UK Aid think tanks and British universities were too not untouched of these waves of new thought, which is also reflected in the narrative above.

Understanding and remembering this broader context is important for deconstructing the process of framing of social exclusion policy, which will consequently, give us a realistic idea about how the policies are framed. How are various forces and undercurrents shaped into a final product? The final policy product is unquestioningly assumed to be an outcome of political, state governance and compliant hierarchies of administrative bodies. However, this flawed view of policy not only distorts the reality but strengthen an unhealthy opinion about democratic and administrative inner workings. On epistemological and ontological levels, it obscures a truthful understanding or interpretation of social processes of change and status quo in social and political institutions.

#### **4.8.1 The non-official processes of policy framing**

Going back to our topic of concern, so far we have identified and evaluated the broader political and paradigmatic reasons behind the emergence of social exclusion as a concept in Europe. However, in reference to our research context, we are yet to discuss the implicit and unofficial processes and practices that are involved in the formation as well as framing of a policy concept or framework. Institutions are not automated mechanical structures but rather, “sets of rules and norms that exists within and between organizations” (Crewe 2014:673) inhabited by and operated through the set of individuals called office bearers or bureaucrats. This makes but essential to focus on the role of international and national politics as well as the role of actors, interest groups and networks of professionals across and within aid bureaucracy behind the framing of policy concepts or frameworks. Jones (2009:5) underlines the linkages between knowledge and policy in development while exploring the role of power in the policy process that coalesce around intertwined relations of institutions, actors and networks and discourse. Further, he recommends researchers to focus on two key areas of practical insights that link knowledge with policy: the production of knowledge and the processes that involve investing the (policy) knowledge with individual and collective voices, disciplinary knowledge, empirical insights and ideological dimensions (Jones 2009:6).

Harper (1998) and Broad (1987) both underline the necessity of international development organizations to consistently produce and reproduce development discourses anew in order to create international political consensus, legitimacy and, the justification for humanitarian causes of poverty alleviation or developing the underdeveloped. This explains the undying

waves of imperative framing and reframing, naming and renaming of various policy frameworks, ideas and themes arising time and again in the ocean of global development.

The context specific framing and re-labelling of communities and countries subject to development renders them amenable to development intervention by international development institutions. Consequently making the development industry resilient (my unpublished paper). This is achieved through the mechanisms of “technology and innovation” or “knowledge management”, (Broad 2007:701) euphemistically called “knowledge sharing” and “knowledge adaptation” in top international corporate development institutions like the World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), and DFID.

The development language which is used in policy papers, reports, briefs and aid projects is replete with the buzzwords, catchphrases and what is called fuzzwords striven all over the development literature. The deconstructivist and discursive analytical approaches have been prominently used for understanding the use of buzzwords, exposing fuzzy words and development jargon that emits the promises for a better tomorrow and make-believe images of the possibility of poverty eradication by international development intervention (Cornwall and Eade 2010 p: viii). However, if poverty forms a prerequisite for development, then the development speak (Sachs 1992) and the terminologies of poverty, provide a pretext for development intervention or tools of governmentality<sup>45</sup>. For example, social exclusion as social phenomenon already existed prior to its theorization or conceptualization as a

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<sup>4545</sup> The term governmentality is applied here, as it is understood in (Burchell, et al 1991:2) wherein the meaning of government is understood as ‘the conduct of conduct’: that is to say, a form of aiming to shape, guide or affect the conduct of some person or persons. Available on: <https://laelectrodomestica.files.wordpress.com/2014/07/the-foucault-effect-studies-in-governmentality.pdf>  
Accessed on: 15/12/2015

framework within the aid industry. However, the very act of conceptualization or framing of social exclusion gave a new lease to the development industry that nearly exhausted its efforts of global poverty reduction at that juncture in time. The adaptation, modification, and transition of the social exclusion concept from a local initiative to the global framework amply prove this. However, the deconstruction or critical discursive analysis of the social exclusion framework can eventually help in providing practical insights into the building blocks of social exclusion as a phenomenon by highlighting the factors and actors those have been excluded from the basic frame.

This section will attempt to interpret the undocumented policy framing practices in order to deconstruct the phenomenon of the framing of the social exclusion policy framework in the light of the findings as well as the abovementioned insights.

#### **4.9 Achieving coherence with World Bank vocabulary**

A relevant example I came across during fieldwork relates to the recollections of an informant named Ryan, a former senior DFID bureaucrat and a European economist who had worked with WDR 2000 team. These forthcoming exemplary episodes are closely related. The first example shows us how policymakers are conscious about the political pressures from above and how they express their concerns about coordination or harmonization of terminologies with top economic institutions like the World Bank. The second example is about how defiant social development practitioners or social entrepreneurs prompted, by their



disciplinary and ideological convictions, strategically defy the dictates of political and administrative authorities.

The following incident happened during the first phase of a social exclusion themed policy framework in DFID in 2000. It shows us how policy language and terminologies are deliberated, calibrated, collaborated, and internalized during the policy framing processes. This is done sometimes by authoritative decrees and sometimes through giving off-record instructions. One day, out of the blue, a high profile meeting was summoned in the (old) DFID headquarter building. This meeting was especially for the social advisors and employees who did work related to policy development and research. A cabinet level Minister was going to give a policy briefing on the “dos” and “do not(s)” concerning the publication of future literature. This was an unusual official occurrence as no one was formally informed or intimated beforehand. Interestingly, the informal aspect of this meeting speaks volumes about how the processes of policymaking are mired with complexities, continuities, and discontinuities. Ryan, who was a governance advisor, overheard an informal chat between his colleagues (SDAs) about the special instructions been given to them on the "maintenance of coherence" in the language of policy papers in accordance with the broader international development targets (IDTs) led by the UN and prioritized by the World Bank. A special intimation was given to maintain coherence and consistency with the language and terminology of the World Bank. The implicit hint also indicated that the series of papers, reports, and workshops would be produced in due time by DFID and its think tank shall take care of it.

However, the issue of instructions to SDAs by an insistent politician created an issue. It took a toll on the patience and diplomacy of the SDA and some governance advisors who were finding it difficult to convince the Minister that "the stone is set rolling and it will gather the moss". This statement was in reference to the cautions of coordinating and calibrating with current "development speak" of the World Bank that has already been taken duly and therefore "not to worry". These complexities around the framing and drafting of policies highlight the gap between the finally printed forms of development policies as it is perceived in the world outside "aidland," how the policies happen through the everyday practices within aid institutions. This incident shows how the international institutions, policymakers, and politicians are equally concerned about the use of selective terms and language of policy drafts or literature that frames or pronounce the policy. On one hand, this incidence tells us about an entire implicit process or policy practices that involve social development advisors as key actors who constructs and convey the policy frames and themes (which I will discuss in Chapter 5). On the other hand, the concern to achieve coherence in development speech<sup>46</sup> between politicians, policymakers, and think tanks does resemble an unofficial effort.

#### **4.9.1 The issue of politically 'incorrect' terminology**

Another instance, from the DFID, is about a standoff between the Chief SDA, the Permanent Secretary, and then Cabinet Minister of International Development. This deadlock was caused due to the objection of the Permanent Secretary (a veteran mandarin) to the usage of certain terms signifying human rights approach in the policy papers. It was eventually solved

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<sup>46</sup> a term used for development jargon by Sachs (1992: X)

by negotiations in social entrepreneurial spirit by the Chief SDA and her team of SDAs in collaboration with the Cabinet Minister.

This incident took place in the old DFID head-office during the preparations of the set of the key introductory papers that DFID sought to publish after adopting social exclusion as one of their key frameworks. This paper embedded social exclusion as one of the key causes of chronic poverty that not only causes people's failure to enjoy their human rights but also hampers the achievement of IDTs. However, DFID's stance on social exclusion or poverty as a violation of human rights made the Permanent Secretary uneasy. The distraught Permanent Secretary took it quite seriously (Informant Rebecca). He found it politically incorrect for an international development agency to use this term while intervening for poverty alleviation. He thought using the 'human rights' approach was as good as meddling into the political terrains of those countries and thus affects the bilateral relations, hurting the prospects of bilateral trade negotiations between the UK and those countries. This caused a big debate in the Policy and Research Department at DFID. This matter reached to the then Minister for International Development. Eventually, after many discussions and negotiations, the Chief SDA devised a way out of it. The Chief SDA, in coordination with her team of SDAs systematically reframed and rephrased the entire argument of DFID in terms of poverty in developing countries, giving it a positive slant. Social exclusion was switched to social inclusion and a rights-based approach was highlighted in terms of participating, obligation, and inclusion. With this, the matter was closed (Informant Rebecca and Caroline).

This example gives us an idea of how the finalized policy frame is the product of scores of unforeseen twists and turns during which a variety of factors and actors situated in the interstices of aid bureaucracy frame and mould the policy through the process.

#### **4.9.2 Framing the policy concept**

Framing and naming have more profound, preparatory and overarching functions of constructing a problem to achieve (Apthorpe 1996:18) that preceded the creation of fuzzwords to spread fuzz and buzzwords to spread the buzz. Therefore, one can say that framing and naming are the building blocks of the dominant development discourses, and the buzzwords and fuzzwords decorate, aid and carry them forward to gain legitimacy, acceptance and justification without explanation (Cornwall and Brock 2005 p:iii). However, the phenomenon of framing and naming should be understood separately from the phenomenon of creating buzzwords and fuzzwords. Buzzwords and fuzzwords work well because they are strategically ambiguous, and thus are seductive and appeal to our common sense so much so that even to the regular critical mind they sounds too obvious to challenge or question (Cornwall and Brock 2005p:iii). Nevertheless, not all policy framework always get smooth sailing, sometimes the analytical strength of the policy framework makes it difficult to be carried forth in international political domains where bilateral relations are prominently based on mutual economic interests.

For example in DFID's case, the tackling of social exclusion within developing countries entailed training the socially excluded how to use administration and the state to secure their

rights to decent living (PACS<sup>47</sup> Working paper Theory of Change 2011). In this campaign, civil society was also one of the key stakeholders. However, in international development, the intervention to tackle social exclusion could have stepped over the blurred line or limit of political interference in the recipient country, which is technically a foreign country with its own autonomy. It could be seen as transgressing the diplomatic boundaries of nation states. The new coalition government in the UK led by the Conservative party was not ready to take this risk “due to the most critical focus of this framework on the underlying and often politically sensitive causes of poverty and exclusion” (Haan 2011:2). This type of precautionary tendency is reflected in an insider’s account above in the section on the processes of policy framing.

Here a quick observation on comparison regarding between the receding of once celebrated concepts like “social capital” and “sustainability” and the diminishing recognition of the social exclusion concept in the aid industry would not be uncalled for. Terms like empowerment, social capital, gender equality and sustainability lost their currency due to their inherent theoretical weaknesses whereas social exclusion was sidetracked (de Haan 2011:15) or put on the back stove (an informant from DFID). For instance, the first usage of “exclusion” and “solutions” proposed thereupon by Lenor (1974) in modern France, or DFID in its policy paper that intend to reduce poverty by tackling the social exclusion as a post-modern social phenomenon (2005:1-2) hints towards the strength of this conceptual framework (de Haan 2011:7-8). This was essentially a political statement with reformative intention. Therefore, the social exclusion framework was neglected by later political regime due to its theoretical and analytical strength to reveal the social structural, political, and

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<sup>47</sup> PACS (Poorest Areas Civil Society Programmes) Available on : <http://www.pacsindia.org/sites/pacsindia.org/files/Theory%20of%20change-1124B-forweb.pdf>, Accessed on 28/5/15

relational factors of deprivation (de Haan 2011:15). The difficulty on the part of the new coalition government to handle the theoretical-empirical strength of SEF that exposed the political, structural causes beneath the poverty in developing countries made it unattractive for the conservative government (informant Arthur, David, John).

In DFID's case, the tackling of social exclusion within developing countries entailed training the socially excluded how to use administration and the state to secure their rights to decent living (PACS<sup>48</sup> Working paper Theory of Change 2011). In this campaign, civil society was also one of the key stakeholders. However, in international development, the intervention to tackle social exclusion could have stepped over the blurred line or limit of political interference in the recipient country, which is technically a foreign country with its own autonomy. It could be seen as transgressing the diplomatic boundaries of nation states. The new coalition government in the UK led by the Conservative party was not ready to take this risk "due to the most critical focus of this framework on the underlying and often politically sensitive causes of poverty and exclusion" (Haan 2011:2). This type of precautionary tendency is reflected in an insider's account above in the section on the processes of policy framing.

From the point of view of framing the policy and usage of language to construct, a policy Apthorpe (1996:20) observes that, "the chief function of any political term is to marshal political support, wherein, some terms are quite obvious while the potent ones are covert and imply strong undercurrent of power relationship." While such term executes the function

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<sup>48</sup> PACS (Poorest Areas Civil Society Programmes) Available on : <http://www.pacsindia.org/sites/pacsindia.org/files/Theory%20of%20change-1124B-forweb.pdf>, Accessed on 28/5/15

“when the power of professionals over other people is at stake, the language employed implies that the professionals have ways to ascertain who is poor, marginalized, sick, dangerous or inadequate and to diagnosis and treatment” (Apthorpe 1996:20, informant Alex). This phenomenon could be exemplified with the American President Truman’s first speech in 1949 (Esteva 1992:1), wherein he used the word “under-developed” for poor countries for the first time and proposed a global level solution of “development” for them. Truman described that under-developed nations are inhabited by people “who are miserable, with inadequate food, victims of disease and their economic life as primitive and stagnant.” Truman said, “They are handicapped by poverty and hence a threat both to themselves and to more prosperous areas” (Esteva 1992:1-2).

In contrast to “the miserable poor without sufficient food” for Truman, the United States was a “pre-eminent nation” that had immense industrial, scientific and technological strength that is constantly growing and inexhaustible. Nevertheless, the imperative of redeeming the “less fortunate,” by “rescuing them” or at least devising or outlining a plan to uplift them, reminds us of the analogy of the “Whiteman’s burden” (Kipling 1899). Thus, the making of “poor nations” is in itself part of the formation of the development discourse that is part of the strong moral-political-economical imperative justifying “development intervention” at any given time. Herein lays the origin or prototype of the later term in the development industry, such as poor, endemic poverty, social cohesion, social exclusion, social protection, empowerment, poverty alleviation, and much more, as explained in Sachs (1992). The patronizing undertone is quite evident in Truman’s speech, which holds the “less fortunate” and “underdeveloped” as a threat to themselves. As the craft of policymaking demands, the language used in the first place underplays or completely omits the root cause of the problem. Here I would say the nominalization of the root cause, the categorization of the poor through

equivalence and differences & legitimation for intervention to end poverty has been achieved through the speech of Truman.

Apthorpe (1996:24) argues, “poverty framed and named as per economics and mechanisms, and poverty framed and named as politics and institutions, are very different theories of poverty and likely to lead to different policies.” This is appropriately applicable to the formation or emergence of social exclusion frameworks. Also, the interest group behind any policy theme speaks volumes about the political significance and grassroots social applicability of any policy. As it is the case with the social exclusion policy framework and its advocacy by policy entrepreneurs with social commitments. There was political sidetracking of the social exclusion framework and ambiguity and non- unanimity about its meanings and applications on the part of many development practitioners from the DFID. Despite, this neglect, and disarray the framework did not lose its conceptual-analytical strength. Therefore, social exclusion is the frame of the picture that includes many groups of people, not just the poor, but chronically poor and disadvantaged due to their systematic exclusion from opportunities that are open to others, and close to them due to their race, religion, gender, caste, age, disability, and location. However, this frame excludes the role of those who have access to social, political, and economic opportunities in addressing or perpetuating social exclusion. CDA in the following exercise helps us highlighting this dimension of the policy making as well.

The missing link could be found by looking beyond the picture or frame and asking the deconstructivist questions: which community or class has the power to define the socially excluded? Are those communities to whom the doors of social, economic and political



opportunities are open taken into consideration? Why these opportunities are open to them or how do they manage to get access to those privileges and opportunities that are denied to the socially excluded? Doing this will not only help us to see if we are on the right path of curing social exclusion, but it will also help us in understanding the detailed hidden dimensions of social exclusion and thus help inform potential solutions that bring about real change in the lives of those at the receiving end. The prevalent frame of the social exclusion approach restricts our ability even to think about any possibility of the socially excluded having any agency or capacity to see any potential instances wherein any individual or collective attempt of overcoming the handicap of social exclusion have been done (Informant Ray, Arthur, Harris).

#### **4.10 The significance of CDA (Critical Discursive Analysis)**

Discourse analysis in anthropology started as an ethnography of speaking or ethnography of communication (Dijk 1985:3). It looked at the structures of meaning and intention beyond the sentence. It searched for the context and sub-text of the textual forms of discourse so as to understand the objective inherent in the statement made, language that is spoken or text written. Using an interdisciplinary perspective, it draws from subfields of linguistics, semiotics, sociolinguistics, or pragmatics. CDA includes the studying of language, symbols, images, signs, grammar, and conversational analysis. CDA has been used quite constructively by critical discourse analysts not to just criticize, but to contribute towards the efficient working of the aid industry in the larger interest of the poor. In the context of international development, this has been done by deconstructing the speech, text, and images to reveal the

hidden scripts of power, disciplining, legitimizing and consensus creation by the development industry done in the name of development interventions.

CDA deconstructs a concept, idea, or dominant presentation by critically analyzing three important parts that constitute the concept, its genre, style, and discourse (Fairclough 2003:123-133). It is pertinent to keep in mind the centrality of text analysis to discourse analysis that moves its focus from specific texts in the “order of discourse”, which is what, according to Fairclough (2003:4), is “the relatively durable social structuring of language which is itself one element of the relatively durable structuring and networking of social practices.”

Therefore, it serves our purpose in hand to reveal what “discourse” means. What is meant by the term “text”? In the words of Fairclough (2003:6), the “term discourse (as it is widely used in discourse analysis) indicates the particular view of language in use that reveals the closely interconnected elements of social life it is constituted of”. The term “text” here implies “written and printed texts, newspaper articles, also transcripts of (spoken) conversations and interviews, as well as television programmes and web pages” (Fairclough 2003: 6). Likewise, the exercise of CDA involves the identification of various lingual devices like nominalization,<sup>49</sup> appearances and reality,<sup>50</sup> legitimation<sup>51</sup> through rationalization, and equivalences and differences.<sup>52</sup> It is also important to consider how discourse has been used

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<sup>49</sup>49 Nominalization: CDA devise to identify the ways of nominalise an entity without any corresponding reality.

<sup>50</sup> Appearances and reality: CDA term to reveal the difference between what is the reality of subject and how it is depicted/attributed in discourse

<sup>51</sup> Legitimation: CDA tool to identify the techniques of rationalization and justification.

<sup>52</sup> Equivalences and differences: CDA tool to identify the commonalities and diversions in two different discourses of same concept or phenomenon.

to construct as well as deconstruct the policy framework under study so as to underline its meaning. This is being done to understand the mechanism of framing, naming and classifying of social types and their attributes and unification under a single frame, the impression of reality that is, in fact, not reality (Apthorpe 1996). For example, devising of rationalization helps to create the necessity and legitimizing of development interventions. The role of framing and naming helps in creating the discourse of a policy idea or conceptual framework within international development establishments, while framing the location of the poor and forms and nature of their deprivation. It eventually feeds into the processes of agencies in mediating, shaping, and formulating the policy ideas and knowledge.

There are various ways of doing CDA and in this case, I have decided to go for selected text analysis. I will do an analysis of the definition of social exclusion as a conceptual tool or frame by discussing the processes of framing and naming of the poor and poverty in their new forms. There are a number of approaches other than the CDA used to study aid, aid-policy and policy making in international development. As Mosse states, there are those who are concerned with the political economy of knowledge, its relation to institutional power and the maintenance of organizational legitimacy focusing on the quality and the accountability of the expert knowledge (2011:8). Others focus on the transmission mechanisms of expert knowledge covering a wide range of professionals in transnational agencies, firms, and NGOs (2011:8-9). Another approach that CDA deals with shifts attention away from the rationality of power-disciplining or governmentalizing, towards more ambiguous processes of actual knowledge production, to actor worlds and the social life of ideas, highlighting the importance of actor relationships in the shaping and the importance of policy ideas in mediating professional relationships (Mosse 2011:10).

#### **4.11 Critical discourse analysis (CDA) of Social exclusion framework**

Discourse analysts have critically analyzed terms like empowerment, gender, civil society, discrimination, and poverty as well as various kinds of speech, text, and images represented in the literature produced on global development intervention. Further, the discourses on development and underdevelopment produced and reproduced by academics, development professionals, international aid agencies and international development think tanks like ODI and IDS have been the focus of studies (Chambers and Alfini 2010; Batliwala 2011, Eyben and Moncrieffe 2007). However, here I will focus on the first, and the latest definition, in the backdrop of the various versions of the conceptual framework of social exclusion. I will do so to underline the similarities and disjuncture between the definitions in its varying locations and objectives that the definitions were perceived to be designed for.

From the perspective above, there is not a single discourse of social exclusion. Rather, there are as many discourses as there are texts produced in their peculiar political, regional, social context at different junctures of time. However, there are still the text specific recurring elements and order of the ideas in the discourse of social exclusion that trickled down to the definition of the latest one. We are going to take this trickling down into consideration.

Even after the conceptual journey of nearly 40 years between the two, social exclusion still retains its original nomenclature and the core of its meaning. At every new turn, the social exclusion framework was reworked, complemented and modified with new qualities, social, political categories, new class-categories so as to make it theoretically strong and to give it a crosscutting social-analytical, edge which was never intended to start with. The political, structural connotations of this framework become more poignant, to the extent of manifesting

its original reformist agenda and thus it became politically unpalatable for the organization and policy makers from its last destination when the Conservative-led government scrapped this framework and put it on the back stove (an informant,) as it supported by de Haan 's research (2011:20).

These abovementioned different discourses of social exclusion have their separate repertoire, often building on other terms and analogies from the original one. The terms and terminologies employed signify economic change; represent geopolitical paradigms, such as neo-liberalization and the global phenomenon of globalization, which are either attested or asserted in reports, discourses, texts, and conversations (Silver 1994:536, Kabir 2005:91). For instance, sexual orientation, ethnicity, caste, and religion were not part of the original frame of social exclusion to start with; they were added later on during DFID's discursive formation in order to accommodate the newly identified victims of social exclusion in a rapidly globalizing world with an unprecedented movement of people across borders.

#### **4.11.1 Political context of its origin**

In light of the information in hand, we can say that social exclusion was a policy concept that rose to prominence in the late 90s as a necessary paradigmatic response to question the inadequacy of using economic parameters of measuring poverty or assessing the causes of endemic poverty in Europe (Room 1992:3-5). This unease originated in French society was also experienced in the UK, and through the European commission studies, resonated in the World Social Summit. Given the contemporary raging debates in the ILM conferences,

European academia, in the context of European disenchantment about the project of modernity and the failure of the modern state in providing wide and strong safety nets to the underclass of Europe, this would be quite simplistic explanation (Informant Alex, European Council report 1989a, the European Commission report 1990d). The interesting exploratory narration of the journey of social exclusion from France to the European commission, to domestic policy of UK government led by Labour to DFID's reworked model of poverty analysis has been discussed previously in Chapter 4. Therefore, we shall limit ourselves to the CDA of this policy and its literary course.

#### **4.11.2 Social contexts of its emergence**

The original framework of the social exclusion policy (SEP) that was used in France had particular religious, social and historical context. The failure of the French welfare state in providing an adequate safety net to the weaker sections of French society – those that were excluded from mainstream – was the reason cited for the failure of modernity. However, subsection 4.2.2 above discusses the social context of the emergence of the concept of social exclusion in details.

In reference to the social life of the SEF in DFID, the extra-official role of policymakers and the networks of social development policy entrepreneurs should not be underestimated. Nevertheless, this entire thesis centres on the extra-official or non-official policy practices conducted by policymakers, policy diplomats, and policy entrepreneurs from the aid industry. The span of the networks of development practitioners and policy entrepreneurs is not limited to any one particular institution or development organization; it is cast wide and across national boundaries and many times goes well beyond the aid industry into civil society

organizations and local movement and activists to grass-root people. Mosse calls these networks of development professionals or interest groups the epistemic communities (2011:22).

#### **4.11.3 Four versions of the Social Exclusion Framework**

There are four main versions of the SEF given below, which set the context for CDA. However, I am going to analyze only two of them for the purpose of textual or discursive analysis, the French version, and the DFID version. This is because the first and the latest discursive formations around the concept of social exclusion will be covered and the juxtaposition of these two will give us an idea about the changes that it has undergone and the reasons thereof. The changes I am going to discuss are related to the change in language used and terms applied while defining the socially excluded as a new category of poor in new contexts.

#### **4.11.4 The French version of SEF (Social Exclusion Framework)**

Much has been written about SEF from the point of view of advocacy due to its analytical-theoretical strength. The social exclusion framework (SEF) has been recognized as an efficient framework that helps make sense of the multidimensional and relational factors behind the chronic deprivation and marginalization in different demographic contexts (Silver 1994, Kabeer 2005, De Haan 2011). In addition, the baggage of cultural and political

traditions each version of social exclusion carries is one of the salient features that underlies these various versions of social exclusion given below (Silver 1994).

As such, French definition of the SEF that is offered in the *Les Exclus: Un Français sur Dix'* by René Lenoir (1974) heavily relies on the Republican notion of solidarity. Lenoir talked about the “rupture in the social bond” that makes member of society those who are excluded fell out of the safety net, which was against the Republican contract of solidarity (de Haan 1999:6). The number of emergent social issues in post world-war French society, including the unmet challenges of unemployment, poverty, and new forms of poverty in the French welfare state were in the backdrop of the French SEF. Nevertheless, according to French policy makers, the excluded were those who were bearing the burns of unemployment, ghettoization and new kind of social problems because of the economic crises of the 1980s. They were not the regular poor but rather a new breed of poor (Silver 1994, de Haan 1999) produced by the failure of the French welfare state to keep its promises in post world war period.

The Following French version of social exclusion classifies the group of socially excluded within the SEF. This definition is borrowed from the original text by René Lenoir, Secrétaire d’Etat à l’Action Sociale of the French Government led by Chirac, wherein he had included a wide variety of people, other than the conventional poor, that constitute the excluded, in total comprising one-tenth of the French population. It includes:

mentally and physically handicapped, suicidal people, aged invalids, abused children, substance abusers, delinquents, single parents, multi-problem households, marginal, asocial persons, and other social ‘misfits’-those who fell through the insurance-based social safety-net (1974).



The above list of the French categories of poor shows us the interpretation of socially excluded by French politicians and policy makers. In addition, there is an important shift in attitude towards poor or in the perception of the poor; in general, that includes people or groups with generally criminal attributes (i.e. substance abusers, 'misfits' and delinquents, and people with a psychosomatic handicap like physically disabled, suicidal, and aged people).

#### **4.11.5 The European version of SEF (social exclusion framework)**

The European Commission established The Observatory on National Policies to Combat Social Exclusion with the intention of studying the underlying causes of poverty in European countries in terms of social exclusion (Room et al. 1992). This resulted in the publications of a number of reports attempting to understand the policy issues, which lead to a debate between European countries on poverty, deprivation, and exclusion. The Observatory was the French government's attempt to identify the causes of exclusion at grassroots. The Observatory intended to address the problem of exclusion of employment opportunities through an SEF that analyzed poverty-related handicaps in European countries.

The definition of social exclusion process (*European Foundation 1995:24*), given below, had the background of the comparative and analytical consolidated empirical reports and theoretical debates produced in France and by European commission publications. It also has the context of unease among European policy makers, policy analysts, and academia in general for the dominant income based or economic criteria of poverty analysis (Room et al.,

1992; Silver 1994). The social exclusion framework was preferred due to its capacity to highlight the multidimensionality of poverty caused by non-economic such as social structural, cultural, and political factors.

‘Social exclusion is the process through which individuals or groups are wholly or partially excluded from full participation in the society in which they live Can be caused either by failure to secure employment (exclusion from the labour market) or by limited access to benefits of social services. This may be related to an absence of full citizen rights.'

#### **4.11.6 The social exclusion as British domestic policy framework**

*Social exclusion is what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime, poor health, and family breakdown.*

*(Social exclusion Unit, 1997)*

Above the Labour Government, establish the third version of the SEF as it was used in the brochure of the Social Exclusion Unit in 1997. Here I would like to add a reflection that Social exclusion as the domestic policy framework of Britain has its roots in the social justice commission. The late Labour leader John Smith, MP, set up this commission. This commission produced a report that prescribed the “Strategies of National Renewal”. Later this report became a part of the Labour Manifesto that pronounced Labour’s commitment to include the groups left out from mainstream or excluded from it due to scores of the UK specific social, political, economic reasons (IPPR report 1994).

The findings of the Social Justice Commission report were included in the Labour Party's election manifesto. Some studies suggest that it was a strategic political move of the Labour Party think tank and its leaders in order to attract the traditional vote bank of working men now turning into the middle class (Haddon 2012: 4-6) as well as those who were left out of the mainstream.

#### **4.11.7 The DFID version of social exclusion framework (SEF)**

The DFID version of social exclusion framework says:

Social exclusion is a process by which certain groups are systematically disadvantaged because they are discriminated against on the basis of their ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, caste, descent, gender, age, disability, HIV status, migrant status or where they live. Discrimination occurs in public institutions, such as the legal system or education and health services, as well as social institutions like the household.' (DFID Policy paper 2005)

In DFID, the SEF was applied to tackle social exclusion in order to reduce global poverty. A comprehensive application to meet the international need for the adaptation of SEF was a striking feature of the latest definition of DFID's Social Exclusion Framework. While the earlier French version laid heavy emphasis on social exclusion as a localized phenomenon, DFID's version of the SEF, by virtue of its global application to poor communities from developing countries, included the social exclusion caused due to religion, caste, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and migrant status as well.

Nevertheless, DFID's framed definition of *socially excluded* in its policy paper in 2005 indicates the operational aspects of social exclusion while mentioning the underlying social markers of identities. This hints at the gradual change in style and prose of policy writing where language becomes more direct and rationalizing for intervention but still elusive about its purpose or solution. Neither does it talk about the root cause of the issue of social exclusion.

#### **4.12 Textual analysis of two selected Social Exclusion Framework (SEF) definitions.**

Total four definitions have been discussed above, however, for the analytical purpose only two definitions, the French one and DFID's are used in the following analysis. The discursive, analytical linguistic tools, such as 'appearances and reality', 'nominalization', 'equivalences and differences' and 'rationalization' (legitimation) are used in the following exercise. This exercise is in order to deconstruct and classify the usage of various parts of the clause, adjectives, and adverbs employed in language to achieve certain effects while constructing statement, representation and constructing the social specific context of the problem in hand. This exercise is done to show how the social issue is framed while underlying games of power, hegemony, and non-empathy exist significantly below the surface of terms employed to create the frame. In addition, this entire exercise hints towards the omission of the social-political agency of the socially excluded and the power of framers of the socially excluded. Each of the selected texts that represent a specific discourse of social exclusion in its respective social-political context discussed above is followed by the analysis using the linguistic tools and de-framing.

#### 4.12.1 The French version

The following definition is borrowed from the original text, *Les Exclus: Un Français sur Dix* by René Lenoir, wherein he included a wide variety of following people, other than the conventional poor, that constituted the excluded, which made up one-tenth of the French population. They are:

mentally and physically handicapped, suicidal people, aged invalids, abused children, substance abusers, delinquents, single parents, multi-problem households, marginal, asocial persons, and other social 'misfits'- those who fell through the insurance-based social safety-net (1974)

This definition was originally formed in modern France in the 1970s to represent French citizens below the poverty line, suffering from destitution with different attributes than the poor in general. This formulation, as it has been observed, had an ideological leaning of republicanism that presumed the social contract of solidarity as per the Rousseurian proposition (Silver 1994).

**Appearances and reality: A)** The social, political analysis or description of the excluded as suicidal, delinquents, marginal, and misfits are biased and superficial in appearances to the realities beneath and it takes issues at face value rather than the consequences of prior circumstances or the social trajectory of an individual. It is as good as stereotyping the communities by conferring attributes. Casual social-structural or political effects on the above-mentioned subjects are not implicated. Moreover, we get an impression that these groups, with their attributes, are responsible for what they have been branded as by policy

makers in position and authority to label them rather than the external forces such as the market and a lack of propitious circumstances to overcome the handicap.

**Nominalization:** A) Again, terms like mentally and physically handicapped, invalids, misfits, and substance abusers are highly opinionated and one sided that nominalises the subjects as the separate entity rather than consequences or product of broader political-economic processes. This is probably a product of a point of view from the social-economical vantage grounds that exudes the air of social aloofness towards which excludes these community members with “special needs” (as they are understood today) of their social personality and dignity. Moreover, this exercise of naming ‘merely’ nominalises the social structural root causes, unequal distribution of resources and market forces responsible for purpose of ‘development intervention’ without ‘accountability’.

**Equivalences and differences:** A) The subjects of the social exclusion, that is, the excluded one and their division and further subversion (say combination) under one nomenclature is a good example of differences and equivalences. This process is a textual instance of the production and reproduction of words and phrases and their unification. This originates from the political process and hegemony or top-down view (Fairclough 2003:99). This grammatical process is intended to classify and clump together. The way the “misfits” or “invalids” of all the hues and colours from French society are mentioned and clubbed together as “*Les Exclus*” makes it an apt example of a semantic exercise done in policy framing. To put it in plain words, this is how the ruling elite class of contemporary France could perceive and describe the socially excluded.

**Legitimation: A)** A rationalization is the main form of legitimation, which refers to the necessity and efficacy of institutionalized action (Fairclough 2003:99). The very ‘insensitive’ terms used for the victims of social exclusion, like mentality and physically “handicapped,” substance abusers, invalids, delinquent, abused and misfits in themselves act as terms that rationalize the third party or state intervention so as to uplift the worst of the poor. These terms appeal to the conscience of common masses as well as other political and economic stakeholders. In addition, it is in line with the commonsensical understanding that anyone who is suffering from such circumstances deserves the solidarity and helping hand of the society, hence the terms utilized acts as realistic images urging and rationalizing for “redemptive” action. Now, this legitimation while creating the rational ground for moral action or responsibility towards the socially excluded segregate and sophisticatedly maintains the dichotomy of interrelations between the social positions and situations of ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots’.

#### **4.12.2 DFID version**

The following is DFID’s definition of social exclusion that was published in a 2005 policy paper. The UK Aid adopted and reframed social exclusion framework to tackle the causes of chronic poverty among the poor communities from developing countries such as South Asia, China, and South Africa. This analytical concept was redefined in order to address and analyze the causes of the chronic poverty anew. Due to its analytical strength, this framework was considered suitable to tackle the non-economic, social structural factors behind the global poverty. The contemporary dominant geopolitical paradigm during this definition was neo-liberalism or new capitalism.

“Reducing poverty by tackling social exclusion.”

*(Heading of DFID Policy paper 2005)*

“People need the opportunity to participate fully in the life of their community if they are to flourish and realize their potential. However, certain groups in society are systematically excluded from the opportunities that are open to others, because they are discriminated against on the basis of their race, religion, gender, caste, age, disability, or other social identities.

People who are excluded like this are not ‘just like’ the rest of the poor, only poorer. These poor are also disadvantaged by the reason of who they are or where they live and consequently they are locked out of the benefits of development. Social exclusion deprives people of choices and opportunities to escape from poverty and denies them a voice to claim their rights.”

*(Foreword DFID policy paper 2005)*

**Appearances and reality** In the DFID conceptual framework, the social actors (subjects) are represented in a passive colour, (i.e. “People need the opportunity, disadvantaged ...those who are discriminated”) hence implying their incapability to exert influence or challenge the situation thus their agency has been underplayed. Compared to the original concept of social exclusion, incapability of agency to the sufferer is still prevails, even after 45 years of change in awareness about the stigma attached to certain social, mental and economical inabilities. However, unlike the original, second categorization does mention “those who are discriminated” at least allude to how the excluded have been discriminated and there is someone who is a discriminator.



**Nominalization:** **Nominalization of the excluded is been avoided in** the DFID's definition, rather the characteristics are attributed to groups and communities denominated by the defining factors like caste, ethnicity, sexual orientation and religions. The representation of the event of exclusion (in this case, the ones who are excluded in public places and institutions) obfuscates the individual agency and in a patronizing way creates the need of rescuing them from the social tyranny without making any explicit reference to who is the discriminator.

**Equivalences and differences:** A similar exercise of bringing about the varied categories of the socially excluded under the umbrella of one term has been repeated in the later period within DFID as well. As if, it is a potent exercise to highlight the subjects by the 'makers of the universe of poor'. However, DFID uses politically correct terms rather than insensitive and offensive vocabulary like in the original, which signifies a general awareness about the underlying meanings of language.

**Legitimation** The DFID policy paper starts its foreword with a strong justification (rationalization) that outlines the need to help the socially excluded people. With the ascending argument, i.e. excluded are not just like the rest of the poor- but acutely disadvantaged and deprived hence deserving candidate to be developed through giving aid—the foreword builds a strong case of legitimation for development intervention.

The ascending use of the phrases like below proves it:

(a) 'people need the opportunity to participate fully ... life of their community'

(b)... to flourish and realize their potential'

(c) ... Certain groups are systematically excluded...because they are discriminated...based on their race, religion, gender, caste, age, disability, or other social identities.

(d) They are not 'just like' the rest of the poor, only poorer

In addition what looks like the new approach to 'framing' is the solution or objective to aid the socially excluded people has been included in this definition. This is reflected in the phrases like 'people need the opportunity to participate fully... to flourish and realize their potential.

From the point of view of contemporary economic and political systems, the French definition is limited to the French context, while DFID's definition was meant to apply to the global poor in the days of neo-liberalization and globalization. DFID's definition takes into consideration the excluded people and the phenomenon of poverty throughout the globe. The movements of people across borders and potential exclusion the newly forming clusters of various ethnicities and migrants might face in their migration to new destinations are represented in DFID's definition of social exclusion.

This is visible in the classification of the 'excluded people' by Lenor (1974). While the use of terms for 'excluded social groups' in French version i.e. "delinquents, invalids, substance abusers and 'misfits' connote localized marginalized characters which connote the modern phenomenon; however, the inclusion of race, religion, migrants, descent, gender, and ethnicity as an indicator of exclusion signify the post-modern characteristics and globalization of local issues through the movement of people.

It also signifies the broader application of the social exclusion approach to the central elements of deprivation, multidimensionality, and the processes and social relations that trigger deprivation (de Haan 1999). Hence, we can say that the French social exclusion approach was intended for social groups that were excluded from within the nation and in the DFID; approach is for groups within and across the changing context of globalization. In addition, DFID's definition was characterized by new findings based on empirical studies and research that informed new directions in understanding poverty through the lens of chronic poverty (Bevan 2003) and exclusion using rights-based approach and debates on conceptual differences between traditional poverty and exclusion (Room at el 1992).

Moreover, the application of right based approach is characterized by the addition of a new marker of social discrimination, namely caste. The inclusion of attributes of the race and migration as a potential marker of exclusion hints towards the contemporary economic, political, and social processes and relations operating on a global level hence relates to the processes of globalization.

Fairclough (2003:101-102) simplifies the Bourdieun (1984) proposition of the relationship between "vision" and "division" as two ways of dividing up parts of the world while generating a particular "vision" of the world, ways of seeing and acting upon. Different discourses employ different categorization of the excluded, as it is evident from the above two discourses divided by two different spans of times, the modern or post WWII and the neo-liberal era, two different geographical areas, two different kinds of societies, two different visions of worlds they exist in. The former definition of the phenomenon of social exclusion is limited to groups excluded from the mainstream of French society during the 1970s wherein the terms delinquent, invalids and misfits reflect the hegemonic

representations of poor people suffering from mental, physical, and social disabilities. Eventually, this social and economic backwardness or exclusion from mainstream society results into categorization or classification of marginalized groups from the perspectives of a politician who is also a member of the French ruling class.

However, in the textual construction of both the definition of what is common and what is not changed, despite all this time and space difference, is that it does not nominalise the one who excludes or executes the process of exclusion, in the French definition.

The terms “mentally and physically handicapped”, “suicidal”“, abused”, “and marginal” and “other social misfits” does not name the forces that cause these things. As Eyben (2004:12) in her joint development, bibliography on political and social inequality adds up to Wood’s (2003:4) suggestion, that “people are poor because of others”. She argues that ‘poverty is also a state that is quintessentially defined (by those experiencing it), either in relation to others who are not in that same state or to themselves in an earlier or hoped for the future state". From Eyben's perspective although the ‘social exclusion' was defined by the so-called socially excluded but the usage of those terms seems to put the burden of the cause of exclusion on the excluded themselves while omitting any reference towards the forces, vested interests or groups from market economies and conventional power structures. The same goes the DFID’s definition, particularly the phrase, “those who are discriminated against on the basis of...”

However, this does not mean that there have not been changes in perspective and approaches towards the poor or socio-economically weaker sections of the society. The positive aspect of difference in the social and global attitude towards the excluded is reflected in DFID's definition by describing the “victims” of social apathy. In addition, there is a drastic change in the approach towards the preventive measures reflected in the terms used to signify the reasons of exclusion within the span of two decades. In addition, the social and public spaces or spheres of potential discrimination indicate a more open approach and positive awareness about the matter in hand and non-patronizing attitude unlike earlier.

There have been diverse discourses about poor and poverty in development industry since 1949<sup>53</sup> mostly dependent on the defining spirit or self-perceptions of donor nations that were deeply reflected and ingrained in the framers, policymakers, development practitioners and managers of the development industry with regards to what the recipient countries and their mainstream culture think about. This problematic of outward projection of larger than life historical, political, and social self has have been one of the dominant characteristics of the international development industry. This outward gaze of donor countries can be equated with the occidental tendencies or tendencies of Orientalism. The anthropology of development has been part and parcel of this problematic and this problem of the lack of an inward gaze in the development industry has been started to be addressed by the anthropology of development (Mosse 2005, Eyben 2004; Gardner and Lewis 1996).

#### **4.13 Emancipatory reading of policy**

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<sup>53</sup> Since first American President Truman first pronounced it in his speech in 1949 ( Esteva 1992)

Production of policy knowledge or policy framing according to Mosse (2011:10) involves decision-making knowledge, including, apparently hard economic facts and statistics, are the outcome of complex relationships including negotiations over status, access, disciplinary points of view, team leadership struggles, conflict management or compliance with client frameworks defining what counts as knowledge (Best 2013). The complexities that surround policy production also influence the policy content or the gist of policy. Therefore, policy reading is distinct from any reading of technical material or literature; it requires different perspective and technique.

Apthorpe (1996) argues in his classical article on reading development policy and policy analysis that the two phenomena of the framing and naming of the policy are two crucial ways when it comes to the discursive analysis of development policy. A CDA focuses on the framing and naming of policy eventually aids in what he calls, quoting Green (1983), is an “emancipatory reading” of a policy.

By introducing discourse analysis into development policy studies, Apthorpe offers us a glimpse of the exemplary outcome of his substantive analysis of aid policy language that depicts development policy-talk as being “helping” by “giving” (and his later addition) “promising” through aid made available under certain conditions (1996). This is what he later calls the “emancipatory reading” of policy language. This emancipatory reading tells us about the social, structural, political, and ideological dimensions of the policy. It is geopolitical, historical, social and political context against which it comes into existence, ironically enough, omits the very critical background that it arose from which is demonstrated in CDA exercise above. Although Apthorpe recommends the use of two other tools, numbering, and

coding, I have decided to use only the first two tools, framing and naming, so as to deconstruct the discourse of social exclusion. The processes of framing the policy idea help to project the policy in an unquestionable manner. It creates a seemingly legitimate need for the intervention or act of providing a solution or remedy for social, economic or political ills. Framing and naming obscure the very politics of policy, making it difficult for those who advocate for and implement the policy to be reflexive. Here by reflexive, I mean reflecting by stepping into the shoes of the excluded. Moreover, by politics of policy, I mean the process that result in the choosing of selective terms and language to frame policy to build a legitimate case of development or humanitarian assistance. This process is discussed above. Simultaneously, while the act of framing social exclusion and naming includes a set of factors that caused the exclusion of a person, it omits several other factors, possibilities, and insights that could eventually inform the production and constructive implementation of policy in future policies. Hence, this misses the dynamics of policy processes and services it is designed to provide thus defeating its own cause. We are going to see how this happens in the following section.

#### **4.13.1 De-framing the concept**

What is “de-framing” and what does it involve? De-framing could be described as an attempt to avoid or break the existing frame of any conceptual framework. In the case of social exclusion, it is to look at the depoliticization of the processes and examples of social exclusion to look at those who label the socially excluded and to whom they label. It would mean also to look at who are not socially excluded. What picture is conjured up when we say

socially excluded? Does it involve looking into the possibilities of the socially excluded people existing beyond the established frame? If we do this exercise, it could be termed as de-framing. Here, depoliticization implies decontextualizing the perspective. For example, going beyond the value position or social standpoint of who is saying socially excluded to whom.

For example, as per my informant Ray, breaking the frame of the social exclusion framework would be to delimit the frame of poverty so it only includes the poor or marginalized. Once we break the narrow frame of poor and poverty, we would be able to see that there are rich and well to do among poor communities and poor countries as well. If we break the boundary of the SEF, we decontextualize it from the permanent social and spatial context where we look for social exclusion, and then we might be able to get a broader view and comprehensive factual picture of this social phenomenon. What if we look at the former socially excluded the underdogs from similar socially excluded surroundings who later on become socially upward mobile? We will get real life stories highlighting the firsthand accounts of livelihood strategies and ways that helped them to rise from the squalid and destitution.

The findings of CDA in this study hints towards at least two important factors. One is about those who have been excluded within the frame of social exclusion and the other is the successful access of those to all those opportunities, which, have been denied to the socially excluded, on the basis of their social marker of identities, social status, and social-economical handicap.



Therefore, if we look at the frame of social exclusion and contemplate, we should be able to see that the frame of social exclusion is omitting the groups of people excluded for more or less same reasons but they may not be poor or may not be facing deprivation but belong to the well-to-do strata of society. They might also have gender issues, drug issues, age issues, disability, or they might have been facing some of another form of religious or racial segregation or discrimination but they are not poor or excluded to that level. What about studying the consequences of privatization of public welfare departments on social-economically upward mobile communities vis-a-vis middle class and their potential livelihood strategies? What about looking at the neo-liberal reforms that aid free market capitalism and market manipulations? What about researching the ultra-modern, rampant digitalisation, the explosion of information through internet, excessive consumption of energy, revolutions in technologies of communication and consequent new forms of destitution and deprivation that might have been the product of our time?. There is a range of possibilities that opens up new vistas for us to see the different social realities. Are we looking at them and other overarching geopolitical forces that so closely influence and shape our local lives and environment? So when we say, “tackling the social exclusion to reduce global poverty”, do the development industry or international development institutions and policy framers and implementers take into consideration these above-mentioned factors?

There is a strong possibility that the dominant framework of social exclusion restricts our cognition of underdogs from the worst scenario socially excluded to those who have made their way upward out of social exclusion. Or, most probably, the ones who are still amidst the same stock of socially excluded but have been devising ways towards upward mobility at individual, family or community levels ( Fieldwork informants Alex, Ray).

Nevertheless, it would be worth looking at the preventive measures taken or solutions applied by the members of affluent groups with similar disabilities compared to those of the socially excluded poor communities as well as the individual efforts or successful attempts of those from the lowest rung of the socially excluded. This could teach a lesson or two to the aid institutions and policy makers and aid managers that might help them design pragmatic policy and projects.

The income based analytical frameworks used to understand policy utilized prior to social exclusion indicate the economic disciplinary inclinations of the related networks, advocates, and lobbyist. However, the very emergence of a social exclusion policy within UK Aid signified the social scientific leanings of the actors and factors behind the SEF (informant Rebecca). Whereas the policy framework of economic growth through market reforms and governance that followed SEF clearly indicate the economic disciplinary leanings of its framers and lobbyists, reflecting the broad economic policies of the coalition government that influenced the international aid policy of UK Aid.

The concerted and combined performance of the aforementioned phenomenon that takes place in the development literature, like WDRs, White papers and working papers produced in the international institutions specific research divisions (Broad 2007:701) creates the effect of what Cornwall (2007:472) calls “normative resonance,” or “paradigm maintenance” (Broad 2007:702). As Alfini and Chambers (2010:502-3) shows that this exercise defies the very purpose language has been employed for. Despite the negative dimensions such as

conflict and corruption, mainstream development language still dwells upon the roles and responsibilities of poorer countries and there continues to be a lack of language articulating the responsibilities and obligations of the powerful countries and international organizations towards those who are marginalized and excluded. Hence, the effect of framing, naming and labeling in policy and practice is said to decontextualize the root cause of the problems people suffer from, devalue their understanding, de-emphasize the material, non-material and cultural factors that need to be addressed to mitigate the suffering (Eyben and Moncrieffe 2007:65). This is similar to what happens when the poverty-related problems of so-called poor countries are framed, named or labeled. Labels like Third World, the middle-income country, South, underdeveloped, poor, poorer, developing, and socially excluded, serve to decontextualize the root cause of problems these countries and communities are suffering from, devalue their local understanding, de-emphasize the lived experiences, strategies they apply to address or mitigate own sufferings .

In his critical scrutiny of the SEF, written for the Asian Development Bank, Sen (2000:26) considers SEF as one of the socio-scientifically robust frameworks that takes into consideration the multidimensional factors of poverty and relational features of capability deprivation. Moreover, De Haan (2011:2) makes a strong case for SEF as an analytical framework with conceptual flexibility and theoretical strength that could serve varied institutional and ideological interests in the DFID. De Haan (2011:2) believes that if DFID can walk long enough with this framework, it would make a major difference in its commitment towards international poverty alleviation in addition to other goals set by the UN. However, despite the observations of this exercise of CDA of SEF, as a social event or text of that social event that sees the nature of exclusion in linear fashion (Fairclough 2003:13), it seems that the strength of this policy framework has itself become its weakness.

Eventually, making it impossible for the SEF to remain in the good books of DFID and its political movers (de Haan 2011, Informant Arthur). However, my findings coincide with the evaluation study of DFID's social exclusion approach to tackling poverty reduction commissioned by DFID itself. It has been observed that there was a lack of unanimity due to the lack of conceptual clarity or lack of awareness among various top actors from development organizations and bureaucracies about the causes of social exclusion, about the location of socially excluded communities and the nature of social exclusion itself (Gaynor and Watson 2007: X). Moreover, this was one the problems that restricted its growth as a framework. This is despite the studied observation that indicates the bureaucratic reluctance could be linked to the working culture of the organization and its inherent institutional weakness and ontological weaknesses of internal policymaking that makes any good policy un-implementable (Mosse 2005, Jones and Mendizabal 2010). If the bureaucratic reluctance or lack of clarity could be credited to the theoretical shortcomings of SEF, as is reflected in its discursive formation, what remains to do in order to take it beyond the discursive development phase of the policy towards the theoretical evolution or up-gradation phase? This evolution or up-gradation is contingent on the process of adaptation to the new spatial and institutional contexts that require the consideration, comparison, and connections with new categories, social situations, and political issues. However, this does not mean that the concept was undergoing only theoretical change and not discursive, but as action speaks louder than words, the policy practices that shaped the policy framework can tell us more about the change. As real action that lies in the informal policy practices of the social entrepreneurs committed to the bring about change in the day-to-day lives of global poor. This we shall see in next chapter.

Moreover, it coincides with the main findings of the consummated critical discursive analysis that hints toward elements of a linear worldview of policy advocates or social structural projection of reality within the chosen frameworks of development policy approaches. The textual representation of any social event or social issue in policy approaches or framework of any ('non-victim') policy maker or initiator of policy obscures the vantage point of reflexivity on the part of 'victim' of that problem, in our case the socially excluded. Despite the potential reasons behind the decline of SEF for being reformist and an approach touching the social structural and political issues behind exclusion, one of the missing links could be the "victim's eye view" of the very phenomenon of exclusion. Another reason could be a skewed understanding of exclusion stunted due to the conceptual frame of social exclusion that limits the excluded and occurrence of the exclusion only to those within the lowest strata or poor and not those who are powerful, and on the helm of the socio-economic world. Consequently, ignoring the possibility of learning lessons from similar occurrences of similar phenomenon i.e. social exclusion among the well to do classes would result in missing the opportunity to learn a lesson from them. The lessons learned could be used to inform the further policy implementations and formation of new policies that would redress the causes of social exclusion that regulate the chronic hardships.

Evans (1998:42) argue that "basic assumptions and values about deprivation and (would be) appropriate responses" from the premise of social policies designed to help the poor. However, many times this becomes the root cause of the problem that haunts the policy practices. In development industry, these basic assumptions and values about deprivations and the appropriate response have a patronizing slant. It is so simple yet confusing that those who assume about the poor, poverty and resultant handicap forget to reflect on the origins of their own capabilities and agencies as well as the capabilities and agencies of the socially

excluded. From their first case study of deforestation in Africa to recent research on the political economy of Ebola, studies by Fairhead and Leach (1996) repeatedly hint towards this phenomenon. In his first combined study with Leach on “misreading the deforestation” of an African landscape by international development institutions, Fairhead and Leach made an eye-opening discovery about effective measures taken by locals themselves to fight deforestation without any external help. Similar findings highlight the need for policymakers to take into consideration the social agency and cultural perspectives of the so-called victims of poverty and underdevelopment, keeping aside the subconscious wiring of projecting a self-understanding of poverty and knowing all about the lives of the poor. And this should be done while introspecting and reflecting on the sources of capabilities of the socially included or socially dominating communities. This is why the politics of policy that is constructed and influenced by the economists and economics of donor countries, respectively, (Apthorpe 1996:18) fail drastically to follow up the politically problematic agendas of policy frameworks like social exclusion. This is because the framework has a reformist rather than the transformist objective (Beal 2002:50; de Haan 2011:20) that strives to address the social structural issues that cause the social exclusion.

#### **4.14 Concluding remarks**

Apthorpe (1996:32) observes that most of the policies in general and development policies, in particular, are made up of answers in search of questions. For instance, in our case, social exclusion was an answer to the question: what causes chronic poverty in the postmodern context? However, he thinks that policy discourses fail to reveal the causes of the problems

they seek to solve and hence they deprive themselves of room for manoeuvre to make a difference (Apthorpe1996:32). Moreover, the time constrained need to float an ad hoc policy template to address the social-economical issues in hands like poverty or social exclusion makes policymakers focus more on the analytical framework, which is present in the contexts of both representative frameworks selected for critical analysis in this section. This focus on the policy frame does not help because rather than learning about the various social, cultural and political agencies of the excluded it ignores it ,consequently missing to note the strategies applied by these socially excluded in coping with their handicap, addiction, and destitution (informants David, Arthur). Social exclusion met with the same fate at the hands of Labour as well as Conservatives. The exceptions were socially passionate development policy entrepreneurs who by the virtue of their involvement with grassroots communities could make the most of this framework. In the former case, the coalition government in the UK neglecting the SEF the downside was concentrating too much on the analytical strength of the framework and later pushing it away because of the political dimensions of the concept that reveals the structural inequalities. Moreover, by limiting the focus of frame only to the so-called socially excluded, this frame excludes the well off people and hence did not take into consideration the reasons of their comparative well-being in the same society. Hence, we can say that the policy that drafts itself in the guise of ‘selective’ answers so as to legitimize its mere operations of development intervention loses an opportunity to learn lessons from its own investment and project evaluation that goes beyond success or failure indicators.

Discourse is not so much concerned with conflicts between concrete interests, but more focused on the total “language forms” that these interests are expressed in (Anthro base).<sup>54</sup> In

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<sup>54</sup> Available on: <http://www.anthrobase.com/Dic/eng/index.html>, Accessed on 30/11/2014]

both of the abovementioned cases of the French and DFID definitions, the power to determine who is socially excluded and how to define them, remains in the hand of a third party; people other than the socially excluded or who were excluding and categorizing the excluded (excluded who are absent in the policy making). This third party takes it as its responsibility to redeem the socially excluded while ascertaining the causes of their social exclusion, without being politically incorrect in both cases. By being politically incorrect, I mean without trying to transform the social structure that is producing the social exclusion and excluded, they plan to include the socially excluded into the mainstream. In addition, a question arises about how the socially excluded are going to be included when the social structures producing the inequalities are still abounding or not being reformed. Discourse creating exercises like framing and naming help to divert and digress the difficult questions like this one. However, there were several attempts made by academic-professional activists to rectify these drawbacks and conceptual lacuna in the SEF, making it more theoretically strong and practical in implementation. This was done through gradual commissioning of studies, organizing conferences and establishing study centres and projects in various development think tanks in the UK. But this requires us to look beyond the discursive dimensions of the SEF. The practical aspect of the formative and evolutionary phase of this framework we are going to see in next chapter. I am using an adjective 'practical' because; the social policy entrepreneurs from DFID put these frameworks to work among underdeveloped communities. And they did it despite the top-down bias and inherent 'lacuna' of framing social issues of exclusion according to political necessity in the 'conceptual framing' of the term social exclusion in both cases. While in France as well as Britain, this framework was utilized to serve the pressing political needs. In France it was used for recognizing the neglected issue of social exclusion of 10<sup>th</sup> of its impoverished population and in Britain it was first used for electoral gain and later on as international



development policy framework of UK Aid eventually put it on the back stove by the post-Labour coalition government in the UK.

Framing and naming are some of the crucial processes of building the discourse and constructing the narratives. It has more preparatory but profound and overarching functions to accomplish. This function is to guide our cognition towards its basic purpose, to construct the problem, the issue in hand. Interestingly, the problem constructed accordingly has implicit suggestions for logical solutions to those problems (Apthorpe 1996:32). However, this is not sufficient: this idea has to be rational, legitimate, and appealing to our social common sense that would logically unfold on a mental level. For example, the employing of phrases like mentally and physically handicapped, invalids, misfits and substance abusers may sound straightforward, blunt, or insensitive, but these terms reasonably unfold the image of unquestioning necessity to help to the needy on the mental plane. In its first instance in the minds of the taxpayers, so-called well to do, civilized and educated, the image the 'policy frame' conjures culminates into the 'broader' development intervention in the poor nations. This power may be the power of knowing the things like knowledge, political or economic power or being able to produce and disseminate knowledge on poverty as well as development.

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## Chapter 5 On Undocumented Policy Practices

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the undocumented policy practices within development organizations in general and one of the leading aid institutions of UK Aid in particular. The introduction is followed by a subsection that outlines the conceptual and theoretical context of ‘the unofficial’ and ‘the undocumented’ practices in bureaucratic processes of policymaking. The second subsection discusses the paradigm of human Economy and offers the theoretical framework of ‘social entrepreneurship’<sup>55</sup> that is broadly based on the “voluntary activities of social economical import that does not fit into the conventional understanding of entrepreneurial activities in development bureaucracies” (Hart et al 2010:57 &148). The following subsection analyses the types of development practitioners and analytical types derived from their narratives of self and actions, based on fourteen narratives. These narratives are also exemplary instances of the focus of this chapter i.e. the hitherto undocumented, unofficial practices within aid industry. The chapter concludes with a discussion that summarizes the case studies, highlighting the points that feed into the broader argument about undocumented policy interventions identical with the social entrepreneurship phenomenon. The phenomenon of social entrepreneurship in the development industry aims

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<sup>55</sup> This concept is based on the thesis of Nobel laureate Elinor Ostrom who defined public entrepreneur as someone who ‘has to envision the possibilities of joint actions and bring together the necessary factors of production into one unit (Hulgard 2010:293) Later this concept was incorporated into the ‘human economy’ approach by Hart et al (2010). Hart et al (2010) made it broader to encompass the economic phenomenon with the edge of camaraderie, commitment and humanitarianism adding new ‘human’ dimensions to the private but non-profit ventures of social development that do not qualify the traditional economic understanding of entrepreneurial activities. Further, this concept was reinvented in the light of the concept of economy solidaire or solidarity economy that was gaining footing in France and Brazil (Laville 2010:13). The *economie solidaire* approach that is based on Human economy framework is theoretically and empirically helpful in grappling with the new kind of policy entrepreneurship initiated by those who were engaged in non-profit and private intervention in the development industry and bureaucracy.

to help poor communities through the effective implementation of anti-poverty measures designed within the aid institutions.

The previous chapter draws on the case study of social exclusion policy framework and builds the case of the inevitable processes of framing and de-framing in the development industry. It also analyzes the framing processes and its consequent drawbacks highlighting the role of interest groups, many other factors, and undocumented practices in framing a policy. Therefore, taking lead from the previous chapter this chapter will illustrate and analyze the role of “social policy entrepreneurs” in the formation as well as implementing phases of the aid policy.

## **5.2 Looking at the aid policy: The dichotomy of policy and practice**

Mosse argues that “by looking at the power and professional life of experts across disciplinary, institutional, and global/local divides, within and between advocacy networks, new ethnography could examine how universal models are produced in socially specific contexts” (Mosse 2005b:12). Another anthropological perspective that highlights the proactive role played by the development agents as a third party in “chains of translation” between local people and anthropologists enables anthropologists to triangulate their findings and gain a better perspective on themselves as an actor in the field (Pollard and Street 2010:2). This dissertation engages with both phenomena mentioned above by the way of studying the social life of the policy idea of social exclusion as well as its journey from local concept to universal model through myriad actors. This dissertation attempts to achieve it

while underlining the proactive role of development agents in its evolution and implementation besides other similar empirical examples within aid policy spheres. Apthorpe (1996b:166) describes this sphere as the policy realm that is:

...beyond a focus on planning, agencies and governmental or non-governmental interventions, planistrators and peasants, there lies the whole field of policy which does not emanate from such agencies, and is unlikely to be written in policy documents of the type used by such agencies, and has altogether different boundary conditions.

The undocumented or extra-official policy practices within the policy sphere that go beyond formal policy realms raise theoretical questions about the rationale of the behaviour of the bureaucrats and limits they transcend in their everyday life within the bureaucratic settings. Durkheim (1986:49) considered the state as an essentially moral institution. He argued that the moral regulation of everyday life is a product of individual freedom and the boundaries of permissible behaviour. The same is true for policy entrepreneurs, activist-researchers, social development entrepreneur, or the movers of the informal economy of the policymaking. They are active within the twilight zone of aid bureaucracy characterized by the interplay between moral-amoral, permissible-impermissible and formal-informal (informants Rebecca, Marlyn, David). While the permissible, official behaviour could be based on the rationale behind of mode of standard official operations, the informal or undocumented actions could be understood as those that fall out of the official ways of getting things done within the bureaucratic setting.

Weber identified a rational-legal authority in bureaucracy that sought legitimacy from a legal order and the laws enacted within it, which is in contrast with traditional forms of authority that arose from phenomena like kinship (Gerth and Wright 1954:217). Weber maintained that

rationalization describes a transition in society, wherein traditional motivators of behaviour, like values, beliefs, and emotions, are replaced with the rational calculations. Weber termed the increasing rationalization in Western societies as an "iron cage" that traps individuals in systems based solely on efficiency, rational calculation, and control (Weber 2005:124-25). However, my findings hint towards individuals in aid bureaucracy more aware about the fine distinction between the mere rationale of rational behaviour as a civil servant and rationale of a higher form of solidarity or accountability towards the destitute and deprived. These types of development practitioners see themselves as championing a radical cause that they are passionate about (Crewe and Young 2002:7). In plain language, they identify themselves as (an activist) development professionals (informants). Hence, rather than getting trapped in the "iron cage" of institutional rationalization, my informants free themselves using the broader and higher forms of the same rationality that take a form of passion for the poor. Inspired by this, they exert their agency by actualizing the policy via extra-official policy practices. The disciplinary inclinations and ideological leanings of the social policy entrepreneurs aided by their grassroots insights seemed to have spurred these policy enterprises. In case of policy entrepreneurs Marlyn, Judith, and Larry and his economist friend, it looks that the voluntary policy interventions were triggered by the situations and circumstances they witnessed at the grassroots level (see 5.4.7/8/14 this chapter). Almost all of my informants, while reflecting on the rationale behind their extra-official policy initiatives, said that it was a "kind of passion", "solidarity" or "a deep sense of moral responsibility towards poor communities" that impelled them to do whatever they could (Marlyn, Larry and Judith). One informant said, "it was an internal urge to make a difference, to make the world a better place." (Marlyn) They concluded that this urge came to them from their formative years with a liberal, humanitarian upbringing

### 5.2.1 Through the lens of policy-practice

Mosse (2005:6) offers a broad overview of the range of issues that the “new ethnography of development” attempts to deal with. The complexity of policy as an institutional practice, the social life of projects, organizations, and networks of professionals are some of these issues. It is recommended that the policy phenomena should be looked at from the lens of actor-oriented perspectives, looking at their ideological commitment, disciplinary convictions, and diversity of interests behind the policy models (Harry Jones 2009:15). However, the actor’s agency is not the sole driver of any policy change or policy emergence. There are other crucial factors, such as the successful formulation of policy consensus amidst contending policy themes, alignment of the right constellation of actors, (mediated) political interference, influencing the policy maker and utilization of power shift. Usually, the calibration of varied actors and networks of actors situated in the interstices of aid architecture follow the process of the policy consensus (Mosse 2005b:3). However, concurrently this has to coincide with broader objectives of the institutions they inhabit. This process is more pronounced on the level of knowledge production and dissemination of knowledge produced by policy prescribed or preferred by the establishment. Among the diverse set of issues, one cannot ignore the professional decisions taken by individuals to advance one’s career while calibrating with the overarching emergent policy themes. Lewis and Mosse (2006) term these actors and policy entrepreneurs as “brokers” and “translators” those who forms an important part of the episteme communities in the development industry. However, how this is achieved by the range of actors within these aid institutions could be an independent research question.

The development actors are engaged in activities of lobbying, advocating, promoting, mobilizing, and indirectly insinuating ideas and concepts that “frame” the future policies. These processes are not always achieved by the formal means of obeying the institutional protocols, especially not through the modes of operations dedicated by the descending flow of institutional power and political-bureaucratic authority. The majority of these activities are implicitly done and undocumented in nature, as per my fieldwork findings. These actions and activities are coordinated and concerted by networks of professionals and could be spontaneous but always a brainchild of an individual that sprang out of their conviction. Here an individual should be understood as a continuous receptor and processor of ideas and concepts from myriad sources engaged in the cognitive processes of comparing, connecting, and convergence of ideas (fieldwork informant).

However, power, agency, and socially specific contexts that shape and influence the formal development policies and practices could also be looked from the lens of the nature of the practices. That is to look at these practices to see whether they are done via the undocumented (i.e. unofficial) or formal (official) ways of conducting official procedures. The study of informal actions, within the confines of highly formalized institutions, could also help us to examine the populist holistic picture of policy practices in the everyday life in aid institutions. The aforementioned exercise can also shed light on the gap between the praxis of policy and policy practices eventually, offering a realistic picture of policy formulation and actualisation.

These kind of extra-official voluntary activities are conducted by various actors situated within the development industry in a range of situations and circumstances. Although the

majority of these practices are unofficial, off the record, or unauthorized in the sense of formal practices, they have direct implications for and influences on the eventual development policy and implementation. Most importantly, whether official and non-official in nature, these practices involve and affect the political, economical aspects of the everyday lives of masses across the globe (Shore and Wright 1997:4). Whereas the nature and effect of standard policy practices are all pervasive and perceivable, the unofficial activities and underlying processes are often covert, indirect, strategic, and replete with complexities. Hence, while the effects of extra-official practices are intelligible to experts only, they are non-visible to the common eye as they are devoid of formal, ritualistic, and bureaucratic dimensions of official technical dictates.

### **5.2.2 How to make sense of the unofficial policy practices**

The study findings show that these ‘kind’ of unofficial policy practices conducted by policy entrepreneurs are unlike the standard official, bureaucratic procedures. The phenomenon of informal or undocumented policy practices I am talking about is comparable to the socio-economic phenomenon of helping each other by going out of the formal or official, institutional ways of development activities through acts of solidarity rather than altruism or formality. Here the development professionals rise and exert their agency as a third key stakeholder, along with international donor organizations and poor communities from recipient countries. While informally aiding poor communities through their often-undocumented interventions policy entrepreneurs or development agents simultaneously serve the purpose of effective aid delivery. These kind of extra-official activities and practices fall under the concept of social entrepreneurship (Hulgard 2010:293). This entire



phenomenon feeds into sustaining and running the broader aid industry. This phenomenon is compatible with the conceptual framework of social enterprise (Defourney and Nyssens 2010:248) or social entrepreneurship (Hulgard 2010:293).

However, the idea of undocumented voluntary activities in terms of the newly formulated conceptual framework of social entrepreneurship needs to be understood in the historical context of institutional efforts to organize society along the formal lines within the bureaucratic fold (Weber 1954:73-74). Hart (2010:142-43) argues that this “ ‘form’ is a rule, an idea of what ought to be universal in social life; and for most of the twentieth century the dominant forms have been those of the bureaucracy, particularly the national bureaucracy, since society has become identified to a large extent with nation states”. Whereas, the duality of official and non-official has a background of “form”, especially the standard bureaucratic form as it is witnessed in our daily life and as it was observed by Weber studying the European bureaucracy. Then the question arises, how can we understand or interpret the unofficial activities or practices within formal set up? Mosse (2005:2) suggests the solution thereof. He says, ‘this could be done by looking at the gap between policy and practice or by focusing on the development practices rather than the established theories’. Mosse (2005:18) points out that in the everyday life of aid projects, the development practice leads to policy and not the other way round. To study these kinds of everyday practices of development practitioners would require considering the actor-oriented approaches that would impart us the theoretical base. Devising new conceptual term like ‘solidarity policy practices’ or ‘unofficial policy practices’ based on the narratives of the meta-official activities might help us further in clarifying the nature of these practices. The social entrepreneurship approach sounds complimentary to these approaches as it applies to the non-standard or non-official economic activities that policy entrepreneurs or social development practitioners engage in to

aid the poor during the formal development and aid interventions for the benefit of joint action and governance (Lewis 2010:267).

Other important characteristics of these undocumented policy practices are its scope and the objectives. These self-motivated unofficial practices and actions were directed towards the end of shaping, constrain, or influencing the dominant political wills and institutional decisions so as to ensure the pro-poor effects of policies and redress the “real problems” of the poor as they are witnessed at the grassroots level by development practitioners (findings).

On this particular topic, some important observations arise out of discussions with interviewees ranging from social development practitioners, governance advisors, independent consultants, policy advisors, and policy analysts. The majority of development practitioners were guided by their ideological commitments, convictions based on disciplinary insights. Even policy entrepreneurs are not an exception to this, their policy interventions are based on their firsthand knowledge acquired through grassroots level engagement. Their personal engagements with poor households, socially excluded communities, activists, NGOs, civil society organizations as well as aid bureaucracies and establishment and local level administration plays a crucial role. Nevertheless, the unofficial policy practices that involve the decisions taken and strategies orchestrated by the senior bureaucrats and development professionals are not distinct. However, these policy practices are conversely shaped and influenced by the constraints of internal policies, administrative and political pressures, experienced by the social policy entrepreneurs while walking on the tightropes of institutional positions and jobs. However, their undocumented actions defy the rational choice theory highly influenced by reasoning that stresses the maximization of individual utility and prioritizes individual benefit over larger ideals (Hart et al. 2010:10).

The case study of social exclusion framework (SEF) and its life cycle (see Chapter 4 section I) reveals that SEF, too, was created through a series of extra-official practices and acts of social entrepreneurship by development practitioners who pushed and upheld this policy framework that was otherwise politically problematic in the development industry since its inception (Informant Arthur, Marlyn). Because this policy framework exposed the social structural dimensions of inequalities and often touched the blurred lines of political correctness of development interventions (de Haan 2011:2). Eventually, the social exclusion policy framework was side tracked in 2010. All these years between 1997 till 2010, the advocacy and traction of this framework was more in the interest of poor communities ridden by chronic exclusion and less or not related to the personal-professional interest the policy entrepreneurs and development professionals who upheld it and volunteered strategically to advocate for it in the DFID (Informant Arthur, Marlyn). The rational choice approaches based on Weberian analysis of highly rationalized bureaucratic behaviour in modern bureaucracies has little to say about the embedded character, forms of solidarity and institutional configurations of social entrepreneurship (Hulgard 2010:294).

However, as the narratives of Social development advisors (SDA) show SDAs and governance advisors trained in anthropology and social sciences already dealt with most of the obstacles of political correctness skilfully. These manoeuvres included framing the poverty-related issues in non-problematic terminologies, convincing politicians in donor and recipient countries tactically, strategically introducing new ideas and policy themes to people from different or overlapping policy spheres, upholding certain ideas while underplaying others while producing briefs, articles, and papers and launching certain policy ideas etc. Some of the key actions included influencing and mobilizing political, academic, and civil

society actors to support and uphold specific analytical models or conceptual frameworks in the larger interest of poor from recipient countries (based on fieldwork data analysis).

### **5.3 Anthropology of Social Entrepreneurship**

The anthropology of social entrepreneurship builds on the anthropology of social change, anthropology of moralities and economic anthropology. Anthropology as a discipline has always challenged the traditional ideas on understanding of social – individual actions directed towards social change. Understanding the processes of social change has been one of the key agendas for modern anthropology as a social scientific mode of inquiry. The ethnographic research methods such as participant observation, in-depth interviews, and life-history interviews aided with analysis, interpretation and triangulation made anthropology a suitable mode of inquiry to study people and places and understanding their actions and intentions.

Economic anthropologist Keith Hart while doing his Ph.D. fieldwork in South Africa came across some non-profit economic behaviour among poor communities, which did not fit, into the mainstream economic theoretical framework. Individuals stuck in cycles of poverty were observed to be helping each other in need economically without any ‘interest’ or profit against it. Hart (2010) who initially tried to grapple with this phenomenon through the lens of ‘informal economy’ later on came up with the ‘Human economy’ approach. Hart<sup>56</sup> proposed that the ““new institutional economics” to be formed out of anthropology, sociology, political economy, economic philosophy and world history. Marcel Mauss and Karl Polanyi, who pioneered such a synthesis, argued that we must rely on practical experience for information and analysis, in other words, start from the “real economic movement”.

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<sup>56</sup> Available on : [http://sds.ukzn.ac.za/files/Keith%20Hart\\_%20Building%20the%20Human%20Economy.pdf](http://sds.ukzn.ac.za/files/Keith%20Hart_%20Building%20the%20Human%20Economy.pdf)  
Accessed on: 07/07/2016

Hence, the human economy framework gave birth to the ‘Solidarity economy’ and ‘solidarity economy’ become the theoretical foundation of the concept of ‘social policy entrepreneur/ship’. (Please refer to Chapter 2).

Social entrepreneurship, social development entrepreneur or public entrepreneurs are all terms used for those who work in the inter-related areas of public and social policy (Hulgard 2010:293). Nicolls (2010:35) defines social entrepreneurship by two constituent elements: (1) a primary, strategic focus on social impact and (2) an innovative approach to achieving its mission. Hart et al (2010:15) trace the history of the concept of social enterprise in policymaking circles and in the popular imagination. Whereas, Gasper terms it as collaboration between aid professionals or aid entrepreneurs as per ideological leanings that could be studied through ‘stakeholder's analyses (2003:1). Mosse and Lewis (2006) later on endorse Gasper’s theoretical position in their monograph ‘Brokers and Translators’.

The concept of social entrepreneurship builds on the human economy or informal economy paradigms that involve informal economic activities. Here it will serve our purpose if we understand the term economy as a careful management of available resources (which is the second main meaning of the term economy) as mentioned in the Oxford dictionary<sup>57</sup> online. The human economy approach focuses on the organizational and individual activities that are neither public nor private for-profit initiatives in nature (Laville 2010:276). Dees (1998) offers the best-known definition of social entrepreneurs. According to him, social entrepreneurs play the role of change agents in the social sector by adopting a ‘mission to

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<sup>57</sup> Available on : <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/economy#nav2> Accessed on : 06/05/2015

create and sustain social value, recognizing, and relentlessly pursuing new opportunities to serve that mission. They engage in a process of continuous innovation, adaptation and learning, acting boldly without being limited by resources currently in hand, and finally exhibiting a heightened sense of accountability to the constituencies served and for the outcomes created' (Dees1998:4).

### **5.3.1 Social entrepreneurship and its relevance**

In this section, I discuss the relevance of the abovementioned emergent theoretical framework of social entrepreneurship, which will help to shed light on the unofficial policy practices of the policy entrepreneurs within and outside the premises of aid institutions. An engagement with the social entrepreneurship framework will help in understanding the difference between solidarity, moral obligation, and compulsion.

The studies on the policy process and policy change often refer to but seldom elaborate the practices that shape the policies and policy outcomes. These practices are sometimes looked upon through the lens of morality, ideological inclinations, disciplinary leanings, and other times through altruistic and patronizing angles (Scholtes 2009:2). These practices are practiced on individual levels or by networks of policy entrepreneurs and development professionals with common interests. However, what could be the compelling force or moral imperative behind these informal actions within formal structures could be a next logical question. Therefore, I am going to discuss the concept of social entrepreneurship as a theoretical framework that builds upon the moral and humanitarian dimensions of such social enterprise. This is because the moral position of 'solidarity' of social policy entrepreneurs

towards poor communities surpasses the possibilities of instant monetary gains and institutional incentives.

Social entrepreneurship is a conceptual framework that focuses on the role of catalyst between international institutions and grassroots. Lewis (2010:267) offers a clear definition, saying that the

...catalyst role (of policy entrepreneur)... may be defined as an ability to inspire, facilitate, or contribute to improved thinking and action to promote social transformation. This effort may be directed towards individuals or groups in local communities or among other actors in development such as governments, businesses or donors. It may include grassroots organizing and group formation, gender and empowerment work, lobbying and advocacy work, and attempts to influence wider policy processes through innovation and policy entrepreneurship. Lewis (2010:267)

This definition supports the findings of this study that involved the social policy entrepreneurs engaged in unofficial policy practices on policy and project levels in the aid industry with the aims to add practical social value.

Another significant insight about the policy entrepreneurs from the aid policy sphere that I came across during my fieldwork was concerning their prevalence. During more than thirty interviews, my informants underlined the occurrence of their undocumented voluntary social entrepreneurial actions, which typically sought to address areas of unmet social need or new social opportunity creation that the public or private sectors have failed to address (Nicholls 1996:39). This aspect of the social entrepreneurship underlines the comradeship or solidarity

behind these non-economic, non-profit initiatives displayed by professionals in public administration who take risk by their direct involvement in innovations affecting public institutions (Hulgard 2010:293).

This is why perhaps the idea of social enterprise or entrepreneurship was later couched in the human economy approach (Hart et al 2010:15). The human economy approach builds on the premise of integrating the moral politics (i.e. to want to be good, do well, to pursue the good life beyond market and state). This is based on the assumption of economic (activities) with a “human face” (Hart et al 2010:13).

However, the concept of solidarity economy is an offshoot approach that derives its theoretical and empirical strength from the broader framework of human economy. The students of solidarity economy observe that social enterprise or social entrepreneurship have become important aims of many development practitioners and policymakers. Moreover, they argue that the development actors are conscious about the welfare of poor people against the broader politics of international aid and thus take a moral-practical stand (Dees 1998:4) (my findings confirms this as well). However, this moral stand does not contradict or conflict with their rational choices implied in the Weberian concept of officials from European bureaucracy (Weber translated by Parsons 2005:124-25). Hence, this framework could be used to look at the creative ways that policy entrepreneurs formulate between markets and the state, which upholds the idea of “community participation” (Hart et al 2010:8). This could also highlight the ways they articulate and utilize the groups and networks within and beyond their instant aid institutions to initiate, advocate, and mobilize resources towards what they deem to be serving the interest of poor.



The advocates of the human economy approach are confident about the theoretical and practical existence of these phenomena, and they hold that economic models and approaches that dominate media and universities are responsible for the obscuring of this concept (Hart and Cattani 2010:15). However, the critics argue and express their doubt that the human economy approach reinforces neo-liberal program for dismantling social democracy due to the potential tension between the attempt to develop genuine solidarity approaches to markets and politics (Hart et al 2010:15).

The social entrepreneurship approach, if applied to the actions of those who have been working within development industry not for absolute material gains, but rather out of their ideological convictions for human solidarity while carrying their bureaucratic duties and responsibilities, can give us a distinct view of the phenomenon of extra-official policy practices. While the rational choice theory presents the picture of a social actor mostly inclined towards maximising his or her own benefits (Scott 2000:136), it does not explain the distinctive characteristics of solidarity or social development embedded in the actions of social entrepreneurs pooling resources together so as to achieve public good. The informal activities here involve coordinating and pooling of human, organizational, and material resources together in the course of their work in the international development intervention to achieve pro-poor development. These people those who work with international projects, corporations, and organizations that involve the public and social policy are called social and public entrepreneurs. The social entrepreneurs are those who commit themselves to the development of local communities and governance networks for limited periods or for a lifetime (Hulgard 2010:295). This is quite different from the individual that merely serves the

bilateral and multilateral economic interests of nations. In addition, the scope of their work deals with development interventions in its all hues and colours, which is what makes this enterprise distinct as its objective, is non-economic and informal nature. The majority of these activities have ideologically leanings.

Seeing this kind of entrepreneurship as pure altruism would not be taking the personal agendas, professional trajectories, and career advances of those who are involved into account. At the same time, I would say their extra-official, pro-poor actions and intention to really help poor and to make a difference in their lives being victims of chronic or recurring poverty could not be underplayed. The criteria of their genuine intentions towards social development could be based on the achieved results of their actions while working within the formal development institutions. Because international aid institutions are well known for their dry, economical calculations and bilateral economic interests, such as strings of trade and import-exports attached to so called development aid. A case that reminds me of questions raised on the utility of UK aid to India was published in May 2012<sup>58</sup> in the Daily Mail UK. The then Indian cabinet minister Pranab Mukherji commented on UK aid, stating that its worth “peanuts” while the Indian defence departments made a defence deal with the French government for buying fighter jets rather than from the UK. Here while the tabloid was trying to question the utility of UK Aid flow towards the Indian poor, when Indian state was spending money on buying fighter planes and that too not from the UK but from France, this news also underlined the strings of bilateral trade relations attached to the international aid. However, in doing so, I distance myself from the monolithic approach like that of Escobar (2012 p: vii) and Ferguson (1994:283) in perceiving development (bureaucracy) as a

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<sup>58</sup> Available on :<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2096628/British-foreign-aid-India-tells-Britain-dont-need-peanuts-offer-us.html> Accessed on :15/08/2015

new global mechanism of the outright or indirect North–South domination or neo-colonialism etc. (Escobar). Several instances during my research point towards many development episodes that took place between international aid organizations and international development practitioners. During these episodes, social development entrepreneurs were found to exert their agencies in bringing about change in development policies and projects. I found that the business as usual saying is not always true, and that changes do take place in institutions like DFID on policy and practice levels due to the efforts of policy entrepreneurs within (Gardner and Lewis 2000). Moreover, my finding confirms the Sussex school of anthropological thought (Grillo et al 1997, Gardner and Lewis 2000) regarding the functioning of the development industry, which maintains that aid institutions and development organizations like any other social organization are susceptible to change. I maintain that there are overlapping and intersecting layers of networks of experts, academics, social scientists, consultants, aid managers and policymakers moving across these organizations and institutions all over the world, cross-pollinating ideas and influencing each other (Pollard and Street 2010:1). They work along with various civil society organizations, local non-government organizations (NGOs) and international NGOs, while working within and out of premier aid institutions like DFID, OCED, think tanks like ODI and IDS. These networks of policy entrepreneurs, development practitioners and other stakeholders are called episteme communities by Mosse (2005b:7-8) and they do exert their agency and do influence and shape the eventual development practices and policy products. This may be called the final product on a policy level, policy knowledge level or policy based project implementation level, the manifestation of the aid industry. These processes or practices take place while adjusting, calibrating, and contributing to the formal dominant policy paradigms or objectives, which are decided by the top bureaucracy in the light of political directions of the ministries.

There is, however, an interesting parallel from the point of view of adjustment or calibration on the individual vis-a-vis organizational level and organization vis-a-vis organization level. While in the former group, various individuals and networks calibrate with the internal as well as an objective policy of institution they are part of, for example, DFID. In later group, organizations like DFID, OCED, and SIDA calibrate with the top organizations like World Bank and IMF (Informants Caroline, Bella, David, and Alex). In both cases, the varied stakeholders try to influence each other on a policy level, eventually shaping the final product of these development activities spanning the globe and consequently creating universal policy models in the social context of aid institutions. The example of the first type could be this entire chapter that focuses on the informal practices of development professionals and policy makers and consultants who act as social policy entrepreneurs rather than obedient conforming employees. The crucial example could be the strategic campaign of DFID to influence World Development Report 2000 and in turn to shape the anti-poverty agenda of the World Bank that was overshadowed by their economists and economic paradigms (informant Alex). This was achieved through the painstaking usage of terminologies and laboriously maintained coherence on paper with success indicators and development objectives determined by top organizations (this is discussed in detail in Chapter 4, section I). This entire exercise on the part of development professionals termed as “paperwork of development” or “development on paper” by critics (Stirrat 1997; Moses 2005b) may ensure the continuation of their salaried jobs and development enterprise. However, how much do the policy practices help in achieving the real development of the poor could be rightfully questioned.

### 5.3.2 Social entrepreneurs vs. the conformists

Social entrepreneurship shares the same objectives as a social enterprise. Specifically, a) to provide goods and services which the market or public sector is either unwilling or unable to provide b) To develop skills c) To create employment and d) To foster pathways to integrate socially excluded people (Smallbone et al 2001:18).

This divides the development professionals in two types: the one who are committed to social development and the others who are conforming and follow the established practices in the development machinery. They avoid undue risk due to their narrow perspective of the global state of affairs. I call this type of bureaucrats “conformist” as they are kind of self-centred and self-contented with the nature of their job. They feel good about helping the poor. They are happy with their self-aggrandized way of patronizing thinking that they are helping the poor without looking into the details (informant Ken, David, Dan).

One of the London-based informant, a policy consultant, David told me about the “obedient, scared and under pressure that is the conformist type of bureaucrats.” David has two sets of acquaintances in the aid industry due to his non-compromising and non-conformist attitude when it comes to principles and prioritizing poor. The first who are quite cordial and cooperative and second who are in his friend circle, but not his friends, as they keep away from him. David is a believer and he believes he is a content fellow as he lives within his means and has much less avarice being a god-fearing person.

David was talking to me about how one loses their freedom and peace of mind due to selfish decisions they make for temporary gain. On one hand, this indicates the restrictions on “speaking the truth” or “spill the beans” or inability to act conscientiously on the part of bureaucrats due to their vested interests or unwritten organizational restrictions. These bureaucrats, who were called “circumscribed”, (by an interviewee of an activist kind) were reluctant towards the social entrepreneurial actions because of their current job obligations and consequent unwillingness to go against institutions they work with. They have fear because this type of action goes against the interests of establishment that fund their institutions. Crewe and Young (2000:17) mentions them as ‘staff within bureaucracies that tends to resist fundamental challenges to the status quo.’ On the other hand, there are also people in the development industry who speak and stand for what they think is in the interest of the poor as well as institutional efficacy, notwithstanding the pressures of stakes within the aid industry.

## **5.4 Some narratives**

### **5.4.1 Last free man in UK ‘policy’ world**

I was interviewing a senior policy consultant, Ken, from a London-based think tank cum policy institute. This institute had played a crucial role in formation and assessment of the pro-poor domestic policies during the labour government. His interview was very informative

regarding the evolution of social exclusion in 10 Downing Street. Further, I received a wealth of information on the metaphysical and materialistic thinking of the consultants and policy makers, which determine their choices and priorities in the course of their careers. These choices and priorities were reflected in their professional lives and their career trajectories.

We were talking about the reluctance on the part of a range of people, including those in politics, aid bureaucracy and academia to cooperate during the research. This discussion was also about the case study of the social exclusion policy and some of its undocumented contexts during policymaking. After seeing the expression of dismay on my face over the non-cooperation, I was receiving, Ken replied to me in a sincere tone. He said, “I think I am the last free man in the UK [in the policy world].” On my request to elaborate how he explained that what he meant in this context was his satisfaction with his humble income and his control over his lifestyle that makes him nothing to lose about and he doesn’t have to compromise his principles. Moreover, because of this principle and commitment towards development he has happily agreed to speak to me. According to him, the nature of his outlook gave him the relative freedom to express at a policy level and do what he thinks is of value in his work as a consultant. He spoke passionately about the days when he started as a young development professional, full of ideal and belief that he and his colleagues were really going to make a difference in English society while working on poverty. Brought up in an upper-middle-class family in a London suburb by a strict engineer father and an educated mother, Ken had never experienced deprivation himself. However, he did receive an expensive schooling and a good job by the virtue of his social standing, which was his justification for getting a good job in the development industry (probably generated at his subconscious level thinking, as I did not question him about it).

Nostalgically speaking about his career as a policy analyst and consultant, the undertone of his monologue was characterized by a genuineness of his desire (and that of his colleague at Policy Institute) to devise ways to help the poor more than merely earning a livelihood in the name of development. His pride reflected in what he continued to live as the legacy of life while many around him were running behind monetary and other privileges by conforming unquestioningly to whatever was going on in the development industry.

This example, along with others, strongly supports the premise of one of my key arguments: there are many selfless and principled social development entrepreneurs active in the wider development industry (Laville 2010). These social development practitioners are busy applying their guerrilla techniques and activist strategies within the interstices of national and international bureaucratic and institutional spheres of donor and recipient countries in the larger interest of the poor and marginalized. I call them “constructive-rebels” because they do not conform to the institutional rational conventions. Rather they find out ways to do what is in the larger interest of the poor while enhancing the quality of aid delivery despite overarching institutional rules and regulations that prioritize the politics of bilateral economic interest.

The following section will deal with various examples in unofficial or informal efforts taken by different social development entrepreneurs or policy practitioners at different times, some of which coincide with the social exclusion timeline in DFID. I am going to include the instances of informal practices and initiatives taken by people from the aid industry and the policy world in terms of my case study of social exclusion policy. I will take into account



other examples within the fold of the development industry and spheres of policy and practices so as to strengthen my argument.

Contextualizing these examples of activist policy practitioners or policy entrepreneurs in the context of the general organizational mood from DFID in the wake of Labour party's ascendance and related changes can give us quite a distinct picture of the policy processes. DFID became autonomous under the enthusiastic yet powerful and principled cabinet minister. Fieldwork findings reveal there was a rumour that followed entry into DFID that the then International Development minister wanted to sever all ties with the World Bank. However, the minister was duly advised by DFID SDAs "that they should not break-up with the World Bank, but should work from inside and improve the policies in collaboration with the Bank" (fieldwork Informants Larry, Rebecca, David, Ron). The background for this working from inside was set up by publishing the White paper in 1997. This White paper contained reformative ideas and policy themes on the UK's role in global poverty alleviation. A range of SDAs heavily contributed to this White paper from the DFID (informants Rebecca, Marlyn, John) through the inclusion of their social scientific knowledge and empirical insights. Every activist kind of policy entrepreneur within development circles was pleased about active engagement in making of the White paper. The White paper published on poverty was seen as a relief as the previous focus of DFID under the conservative party was not on poverty reduction. Particularly all the social anthropologists from within DFID were pleased about this aforementioned change because it meant more power to them and more opportunities to engage pro-actively with development apparatus. The above-mentioned developments eventually culminated into an innovative act on the part played by DFID through an international paradigm change. The role of SDA cadres from DFID in influencing and contributing to the making of World Development Report 2000 was a remarkable social

entrepreneurial accomplishment. The collective endeavour of influencing WDR involved their theoretical and empirical contribution towards poverty policies. The prominence of the social analysis of poverty policy injected in 2000 WDR tells us a lot about the work culture and institutional mood of DFID then. This was the mood and ambiance that gave freedom to government advisors, SDAs, to express and exercise their ideas and implement their knowledge in the larger interest of joint objectives and targets of the DFID and United Nations Organisation (UNO) (based on fieldwork data and informants Alex, Rebecca and Bella).

#### **5.4.2 The informal contribution to propagation of SEF**

The story of origin and evolution of SEF has been discussed in detail in Chapter 4: section I, however, in line with the topic of the chapter the following section underlines the phenomenon of ‘informal activities’ of policy entrepreneurs in the propagation of SEF.

Any formal policy analyst, academic, or bureaucrat from the French society or polity did not deploy the term social exclusion. Like many other terms that were methodically appropriated by the development industry from civil society organizations or day-to-day usage (Batliwala 2007), this word was borrowed from an informal source or religious social entrepreneur who wanted to identify the deprived and destitute parishioners from his parish. This term was used first used by a Polish Catholic priest, Father Wresinski, in 1957 in France, used to label the people “next door”, those who have been neglected or excluded from mainstream society – *les Sociale exclues*. French politician Rene Lenor (1974) later adopted the term in a report wrote while serving as secretary of the social policy department in France during the Chirac government. Afterwards, the term started to be used internationally to label a specific cluster

among the poor in the hands of the International Labour Organization (ILO). In DFID it became a comprehensive term with new social-structural and political dimensions and mixed social-cultural nuance of the ethnic context of a globalized society. These later add-ons of social-structural, cultural-political, sexual-physical and ethnic features widen its connotation in the international context of aid directed towards the new genre of poor (see Chapter 4&5). However, how this conceptual framework was redefined, worked out and introduced into the DFID is a good example of social entrepreneurship or the informal economy of policy making.

Charity is one of the cardinal values of Christianity. So is the practice of helping the poor through organized religious institutions such as the Church. However, the informal efforts of a Christian priest that took the form of an international movement have also contributed to the coining of an analytical, conceptual framework that helped in efforts reduce poverty in a global scale. (See Chapter 4: section I)

### **5.4.3 Introducing Social exclusion in the DFID**

A senior DFID bureaucrat who later turned to academia shared the following narrative. In the course of interaction when I asked her how she would like to identify herself, as a development professional, an anthropologist or an activist, she replied I would say, “an activist anthropologist/activist-anthropologist working as a development professional”. Her story offers us with one of the main examples of unofficial initiatives or practices within the UK aid from my research. In this case, a senior official from a top development think tank in London became instrumental in introducing a domestic policy theme of UK government to the above-mentioned senior DFID bureaucrat. This (senior official) policy entrepreneur

ended up cross-pollinating the policy framework of social exclusion from domestic policy to an international development policy framework.

#### **5.4.4 The inception of social exclusion in IDS**

The inception of social exclusion as an analytical concept took place in one of the prominent think tank in the UK. This was just prior to the “(social) policy entrepreneurial” attempt of introducing social exclusion to a senior SDA by a policy entrepreneur (see Chapter 6:3.2). The entire process of emergence of the conceptual framework of social exclusion was the outcome of experimenting with certain concepts and ideas in the think tank, which led to a conviction for the necessity in consistency between domestic and international development policies in the UK. It was during the weekly lunchtime seminar that concept of social exclusion was introduced. The discussions during this period highlighted the prospects of social exclusion concept to development interventions, which targets global poverty alleviation were discussed. John was one of the key actors behind this entire policy process. The important aspects of the career trajectory of John, closely related to his policy entrepreneurial initiatives, is his work experience in Africa and South Asia as a development economist prior to his work at IDS. As my fieldwork confirms, the career movements of policy entrepreneurs between international development and finance institutions is one of the main features of social development entrepreneurship. Nevertheless, as per John’s own narrative, he was in close communication with a London based think tank, the New Policy Institute, which was working on domestic poverty problems within England, this fact was confirmed during an interview with a policy analyst from this institution. Based on his international and national knowledge and policy insights, John came up with the comparative

analysis of poverty trends and characteristics from the developed and developing countries. This was an act of social policy entrepreneurship that culminated into the convergence of diverse poverty knowledge connected with identical social-structural and political, economic nodes (from the global North and South) into the analytical conceptual framework of social exclusion. Then the social exclusion framework was recommended to the contemporary constellation of social policy entrepreneurs in the DFID (source informant).

As an essential part of the academic ritual of launching social exclusion as a new alternative to existing approaches used to analyse global poverty, the brainstorming at the lunchtime seminar culminated into a conference and special issue on social exclusion. In the research magazine, social exclusion was introduced as a new alternative concept for the study of deprivation, suggesting that, as a concept, it has the capacity to shed light on the relational and multidimensional properties of poverty and issues that perpetuate the poverty (de Haan 1998:10).

During the comparative analytical exercise in the research magazine, contributed by various development practitioners and researchers and their well-defended articles, social exclusion was examined and analyses thoroughly in reference to the contemporary debates of poverty and existing common concepts such as poverty, vulnerability, and entitlement. Eventually, these studies highlighted the analytical-political signification of social exclusion while underlining the innovative aspect of the concept of social exclusion that facilitated the focus on processes, the mechanisms and institutions that exclude people from the mainstream (de Haan 1998:10-11-17). These conclusions were later transfused into policy implications and recommendations in reference to the context of contemporary dominant development

paradigms and approaches of poverty reduction, from 1950 through to the 1980s, further upended by more studies commissioned and conferences funded by the World Bank, ILO and DFID. All of this is what initiated the concept of social exclusion later on to be introduced in the DFID.

There remain further political and social contexts to explore the trajectory of social exclusion as a concept that goes beyond the history of social exclusion in the UK and DFID. This background is comprehensively discussed below and briefly described in the chapter that will act as backdrop to this discussion.

#### **5.4.5 The power lunch**

A couple of month after the 1997 Labour party victory, the then top official from a prominent development think tank, John, casually invited another top social development official from DFID, Rebecca, for lunch. Coincidentally a high-level politician from the then government was already present there. This person was instrumental in the formation of a strong new unit of social exclusion in the light of the ruling party's manifesto and its promises to its vote bank. This seemingly casual lunch turned out to be a power lunch.

John had already been a part of joint efforts of development think tanks that were working on comparative analytical projects on poverty in the UK as well as poverty between developed and developing countries. Moreover, John was a keen supporter of thought that supported the consistency in the domestic and international development policies in the UK. During this

lunch and informal discussion, John positively convinced the DFID senior bureaucrat, Rebecca, to consider the concept of social exclusion as the model for poverty analysis in DFID in its efforts toward global poverty alleviation. John argued that social exclusion as a conceptual and analytical frame allowed for the looking into the globalized processes of exclusion and inclusion. He reiterated convincingly that, despite different social-political and cultural context, exclusion technically remains similar whether it is in the developed countries or developing countries, and that we should get rid of binary to see what we can learn from each other. This convinced Rebecca to a certain extent, although she was not yet comfortable with the concept of social exclusion.

John acted like a true social policy entrepreneur by introducing or initiating the dialogue between two prominent offices of the British establishment. That is, the Cabinet ministry and the Department of International Development – he proactively worked on the idea in comparative analytical manners by engaging with the concept of social exclusion while working as director of one of the prominent development think-tanks in London. By the virtue of his engagement with other leading policy institutes in London, and being abreast with related policy development in the UK and abroad, he took great efforts to connect the various groups of people. He invited and connected the key actors from the DFID and Cabinet ministry (most probably who was involved with projects and programs of the Labour government) and made a case for the development of the UK's domestic policy framework into its international development aid policy framework. Those days this framework of social exclusion was in the currency due to the Labour party's agenda of social justice and inclusion.

However, the actor from the DFID, who was not so much attracted with the conceptual basis of framework compared to his approach related to human rights, needed some convincing. Therefore, John argued about the plus points of the social exclusion framework that would diminish the binary of development perceptions about developed and developing countries or donor or recipient countries. This resulted in a joint conference or seminar on social exclusion, which was published as an IDS bulletin (John, Rebecca). Moreover, later on, this work converged in the DFID's target strategy papers series published by the DFID. However, the idea of social exclusion did not get traction easily in the DFID. It was introduced in a contentious ambiance where many ideas were articulated and their backers trying to create consensus. The intellectual atmosphere from the DFID vigorously upheld and tactically argued the rights-based approach and gender-in-development. On top, the then cabinet minister was not quite positive towards the social exclusion paradigm (Informant). However, this concept got leverage at the centre through the Labour party manifesto and domestic anti-poverty programs to tackle social exclusion meant that this idea eventually got an unbeatable boost in the DFID.

As we can see how a casual lunch that may have been strategically planned caused productive exchange of the ideas and connections, which converged into a new chapter in the UKAid. The voluntary 'intentional' endeavour to coordinate two top brass official by a policy entrepreneur resulted into floating the 'policy framework' that dominated the UK aid for a nearly decade. Now nowhere in the literature so far produced on the social exclusion policy framework, we are going to read about this 'account' of policy entrepreneurship, which is very likely to be taken for granted as a regular event in everyday life from the bureaucratic



sphere. However, there was a ‘method’ behind this activity, which moved the mountains (of ideas) within the highly formalized and organized political-administrative world.

#### **5.4.6 Politically ‘incorrect’ terminology of ‘human rights’**

Another incident that took place during the same period involves the framing of the policy framework and the blending the social exclusion framework with the human right approach. This episode is one of the suitable examples of undocumented policy practices’ on the part of the Social Development Advisor Rebecca. The past connection of the UK international aid enterprise ODA with the Foreign Office and its political underpinnings and economic ties as international, bilateral relations cast deep influence of politicians, top civil servants, and economists on this entire institution that prevailed even after it was given autonomy as the DFID. This kind of super-ordination and power had not only lasted longer than the connection, but as we could see, it has been re-asserted via Conservatives and Neoliberals soon after they assumed the power in the centre. This is exemplified by “the political decision by Conservative-led coalition to put social exclusion policy framework on back-stove” in 2010 (informant). Therefore, this incident is also about a permanent secretary who behaved like any seasoned mandarin (diplomat) who takes cautionary measures for whatever goes against the state. In our case, the permanent secretary opposed the usage of what he thought were politically wrong terms in ‘DFID’s target strategy paper.

One of these initial papers after adopting social exclusion concept in DFID was titled “Realizing human rights for poor people”. It was directed towards strategies for achieving the

international development targets (IDTs) in terms of chronic poverty as a violation of human rights. This paper embedded social exclusion as one of the key causes of chronic poverty that is not only causing the people's failure to enjoy their human rights but also hampering the achievement of IDTs. However, DFID's stance on social exclusion or poverty as a violation of human rights made the permanent secretary uneasy. He took it seriously (Informant Rebecca).

The then minister of international development who was known as a strict and outspoken was quite enthusiastic about the international development. Later on, this minister grew quite insistent on DFID's coordination with international organizations like WB and UN and its commitment to achieve the IDTs, which later transpired into the Millennium development Goals (MDGs). When, with intellectual collaboration with a Chief Social Development advisor (CSDA) and other SDAs, it was decided to include a social exclusion model to assess poverty into the main policy fibre of DFID, a series of policy papers were produced to show how DFID was going to support IDTs by tackling the issues causing poverty. One of these policies spoke about "realizing the human rights of poor people", which sparked an internal battle in DFID. The usage of the term social and economic as human rights upset the permanent secretary (the head of civil services). He either objected the usage of those terms due to his skewed understanding of connotations of these terms or his political-diplomatic perception of human rights as problematic issues as something politically incorrect way of development intervention in foreign countries. He expressed his dislike for the phrase "denial of social-economic rights" (in the wake of social exclusion) and there was a huge verbal battle on this within the corridors of the DFID.

Therefore, to avoid the further conflict and complications, a strategy was planned by the policy entrepreneurs. The strategy was to reframe the paper. The paper was systematically reframed and rephrased; the CSDA approached the matter in the paper in such a way that made it positive and convincing without losing its core essence. They turned around the social exclusion to inclusion and approached the paper with highlighting the three pillars of a rights-based approach: participating, obligation, and inclusion. This eased the political conscience of the permanent secretary and the paper was eventually published (Informant Rebecca and Caroline).

This is but one example of many during which the social advisors were more subtle, innovative and diplomatic while driving certain ideas and pro-poor policy themes to politicians and the super-class-one official who had their own versions (understandings) of the idea of the grass root implications of development policies and projects.

However, the root cause of the theoretical and general misunderstandings between the different levels of aid bureaucrats is also due to the reluctance on the part of bureaucrats, aid managers, and development professionals to read and grasp the central policy themes. Jones and Mendizabal (2010:12) found in their research survey that ‘nearly 30% of the respondents had never read all or part of a DFID-commissioned research report’. In such situations and technical deadlocks, the policy entrepreneurs resort to the creative ways to avoiding the conflict to get ‘work done’. These creative ways and individual and collective actions go unnoticed due to the informal and mundane nature of these activities.

#### **5.4.7 Making a case for gender, caste, and social exclusion**

The following example was during the period when social exclusion gained traction in the DFID. Social exclusion was receiving increasing acceptance as a conceptual framework to focus the inequalities, differences, and divisions giving rise to deprivation, mortality, and destitutions of the poor population around the world. A Senior Social Development Advisor (SSDA) and the member of the Asia Regional Team in DFID set an example by and creatively pushing the issue of inclusion of caste as the basis of gender discrimination. The first-hand experience and grassroots involvement of this SSDA convinced her that caste dimension of gender is what causes the alarming rise in infant mortality in addition to cholera and typhoid among the poor from South Asia.

This senior SDA, Marlyn, thought that social exclusion was a pragmatic concept and a useful way of putting forward an agenda that was more than just gender in terms of non-economic and social equalities. This perspective did not dawn to her all of the sudden. Rather, as per Marlyn's account of the story, a series of events connected with her thought processes based on studied comparison and connections over a long period of time on various interrelated factors within her target population were responsible for her conclusion. While working in South Asia, she recognized the interconnection between the illiteracy, motherhood, and social exclusion responsible for the increase in infant mortality rate due to not being vaccinated. Her work among the statisticians at a health research institute in South Asia introduced her to a quantitative approach while measuring the ratios of child mortality. However, the correlation of ratio of child mortality with poverty made her ask certain questions to herself. There was a follow-up study on children that looked at which children were not getting vaccination. In

this study, the children who came to the cholera hospital with diarrhoea received their first dose. In the follow-up study, six weeks later to see which children did not receive vaccination; Marlyn came across some shocking and striking findings: the non-vaccinated children belonged to mothers who have not been to school and mostly their fathers and families were extremely poor. This convinced Marlyn about the power of social factors that determined the likelihood of children getting re-vaccinated. However, then, the issue was not about caste, but other social factors that were clearly linked to the infant's survival chances. Later on, while working on the South Asia desk in the DFID office in London, Marlyn came across an article referring to the British Medical Journal saying that if one can get rid of gender inequality it would reduce child mortality from India in the huge proportion. For Marlyn it was a kind of revelation, discovering the missing link. It was also during this time that she received information from local NGOs in India about atrocities on Dalits and their massive social exclusion restricting their access to health facilities. The question in front of Marlyn was how to mobilize the DFID machinery and attract its attention towards addressing this problem. Therefore, during this juncture of time Marlyn started expressing her views about DFID's commitment to the Millennium Development Goals about reducing the child mortality rate in informal group conversations. She thought this was the Achilles' heel, this is the thing she can push DFID on and not on the atrocities. To push DFID about atrocities in India would be politically problematic. Therefore, Marlyn changed the definition of atrocity itself. She formulated a standpoint, a statement, she said, "It's an atrocity to die in childbirth because someone refuses to touch you. It's an atrocity to die of measles because somebody can't be bothered to give you vaccination." She found a corollary between social exclusion and being a Dalit (a former untouchable), and she thought the very word socially excluded and Dalit means somebody doing something to someone else; it invokes the image of not only the victim but also the perpetrator. Marlyn started deliberately speaking and discussing

her perspectives on the interrelation between child mortality, and caste as the basis of social exclusion on daily basis with her counterparts and colleague in DFID for months.

Simultaneously, Marlyn coordinated with an international organization fighting for human rights of Dalits and worked out a program to push the local MPs from their constituency to lobby for and to take the issue of human rights of Dalits to the British Parliament. She also briefed the related MPs about the gravity of the issue in hand and its relevance to the UKs commitment towards global poverty alleviation. Marlyn roped together a team of distinct actors with ideological similarities from civil society organization, legislature, and aid bureaucracy and implicitly campaigned until she achieved success. Soon DFID channelled its resources equipped with social exclusion perspectives towards the aforementioned region. This helped in creating awareness and uniformity of thoughts and indirectly forming the consensus on how social divisions like caste generate a multitude of handicaps and thus obstruct the achievement of Millennium Development Goals. Subsequently, this sentiment started finding expression in policy papers and poverty reduction strategy papers and projects designed to run programs to tackle the social exclusion.

#### **5.4.8 Trial and error: Exerting authority beyond jurisdiction**

The following account is about an episode of undocumented and extra-official policy intervention in the hands of one of my key informants, Larry. Larry worked as a Governance Advisor (GA) in DFID during early 2000. In this incident, he, and his economist colleague, and a consultant, together successfully influenced the decision of a senior politician from a

conflict-ridden country of South-Saharan Africa. In this attempt, they were severely reprimanded (by their bosses). To catch the narrator's spirit of narration, (which I have experienced), I have decided to transliterate the story with minimal changes and thus present it in first person narrative.

Larry:

I worked as a governance advisor then. Governance advisors were partly involved in the delivery of pro-poor projects that would improve the conditions of the poor but we were also involved in ensuring microeconomic policies delivery and that meant overall structures of government in the recipient countries.

It was during the regime of a fiery lady cabinet minister who had renown for her straightforward style. It was when the DFID policies towards poor countries were in the lines of World Bank policies; hence, the microeconomic policies were similar to those, which were sanctioned by World Bank that is why we could work with World Bank. So, once you might think that policy sphere was quite limited to do something off beat, however, I experienced that time even within my jurisdiction there was enormous policy space. If you could argue your point, you have to argue it by refereeing to the pro-poor policies without overtly going against the grain of the DFID and by the way, World Bank policy dictates or decisions. Of course, you could not say 'I disagree with the World Bank and I want something else but if one has to argue it you could point out particular situation within due to particular circumstances. For instance you could argue against the policies those were different, however, were no more useful in reference to context to the IDTs i.e. International Development Targets. The IDTs were transpired to MDGs i.e. Millennium Development Goals, that obviously could be used to bring the objection into the broader picture of DFID's commitment to the MDGs prioritized by World Bank while making your argument. But if you fail to do so you are doomed.

Nonetheless, policies were decided top-down, the International Development minister was a forceful person. When she had a view, you just could not change it. The war-torn South Saharan country Bangalla I was refereeing to was decided early on by minister to be led by progressive government. Of course, this was in the aftermath of the genocide over there and a minority group had gained power in government. This government waged war by proxy in the mainland and killed many people. However,

this was underplayed and thought as a pro-poor government, a necessary evil due to the existence of other genocidal militant groups in the political picture of that country.

As the above-mentioned country came into our jurisdiction as well, one of my colleagues from our Greater African Home division of DFID, who was an advisor for Humanitarian aid, come to know about the stark ground realities of killings over there being committed due to the proxy war. He has turned his help down, as everyday; he was presented with clear circumstantial evidence that the government of Bangalla was directly involved in supporting the murders in the mainland. He could not keep quiet so he pushed and pushed the DFID to acknowledge the grave situation, urging not to work with the groups government of Bangalla supported in the mainland. When the pressure of his opposition increased, a closed conference was called for our department. The minister said ok this meeting would clean the air we can discuss the issues. If you have any disagreement with our policy or any evidence to be discussed, bringing it out here and this person, he brought up his disagreements and everything, but his resistance was crushed. It is very clear in this meeting we were told and this is the policy, and shut up or leaves. She was the boss so he shut up and found another part of Dfid to work with.

However, as we concluded my economist friend was too direct and confrontational while dealing with this case. This was a learning curve for others and me. We learned from this mistake but not without paying for it.

Regarding the policy space and how it positively contributes and changes the policy implementation in the interest of the poor, the other anecdotal incident that involves Larry is to follow. During this incident, he (Larry) was able to get through without much grief or risk, unlike his colleague above.



### 5.4.9 Heuristic learning

Larry:

In my case, to start with, despite the dictatorship in Bangalla, the pro-poor statements of the government of Bangalla were recognized by the DFID for its face value. Moreover, we all from Greater African office were ok with it. However, I was of the opinion that the way World Bank tried to push through what I considered as neoliberal reforms would harm the economy of Bangalla and would further weaken the administration excluding the poor sections of society. I argued that we should follow the ideas of budget support and support the pro-poor strategy for Bangalla while strengthening the civil service to enabling to deliver the pro-poor programmes. As trying to privatize the development would weaken the delivery. Now this stand would go against the number of standard policies within the DFID, which was keen on privatizing and seeking to implement market-related principles as much as possible. On the other hand, I was saying strengthen the state because this is actually, where they are connected. Moreover, if we assume that they (DFID) would prefer to implement pro-poor policy there was scope here in what I was saying. In addition, I could get away with that argument. Not only me, but my economist colleague supported it as well. Together we could put the policy proposal that took that line of those ideas of governance. The whole department was very active in trying to ensure that the Poverty Reduction Strategy, policy for Bangalla was being supported at all levels including high up in World Bank. Now I think had it been another country we might not have had that leeway. Nevertheless, this was an example of flexibility on certain principles as long as we could argue the point within the overall DFID framework, which was to support the Bangalla government.

### 5.4.10 Setting up 'check' mechanism in the recipient country

Larry:

In retrospect now, I think that there were gaps in policy implementation in Bangalla. Despite the top-down flow of policy politics, in the sense that as long as we supported the general policies in this case the PRSPs (Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers) we can say

in this case government of Bangalla was pro-poor and must be helped. We could use that freedom in the clearly specific conditions of Bangalla to give them much more leeway than the other governments would have received. I am not sure whether the other sections of DFID had similar opportunities, but it was my impression that in general when the governance advisors met at retreats all of us had stories about what we have prioritized within our respective countries. What most of us seem to say was that we produced an analysis of what mattered and they could be approved. Because you could have an analysis that said in this country, supporting civil society is a priority because we need to strengthen democratic politics. You could also have an analysis that said in this country that the financial control is most important. Therefore, to some extent it was up to us to make those judgments and that would mean we could support policies that were much more bottom-up or top-down. While DFID certainly in principle was supporting what I could call neoliberal reforms at the macro level and within government structures, there was the poverty reduction White paper, there were the ideas of social exclusion. There were the PRSPs (poverty reduction strategy papers).

In that sense it was a great time to work there, you felt you could do what you choose and what you believe and what you support. I personally think I had a lot of influence; my economist colleague and I were instrumental in pushing through for Bangalla. This worked in following way at that time. DFID has just started to have the approach, which involved the memorandum of understanding with the good people, and within the countries, that DFID felt they could trust. Therefore, in Bangalla's case and other two countries in South Saharan Africa, DFID had a memorandum of understanding, which meant that we guarantee that in near future we will maintain levels of support at the level they were now or increased and that we will give a huge chunk of budget support. In return for that, we got assurances from countries that they would maintain certain pro-

poor policies. When the PRSPs came into existence, it was agreed that the aid recipient African countries would fulfil their poverty reduction strategic goals and we will then support them in the endeavour.

However, in Bangalla's context that memorandum of understanding was also like a smoke screen because it shows that the government of Bangalla would fail in improving their human rights records and any concerns one might have in involvement in other states. Therefore, after much deliberation, my colleague and I decided to introduce a check mechanism for the Bangalla government. We came up with an inventive idea. Every year there was a meeting on MOU (memorandum of understanding), wherein they would discuss the issues and take stock of ongoing affairs. This meeting would be a top level meeting where the boss of DFID section would need to be with the main person in government in the state that was in charge of the Aid relations. In Bangalla's case, normally it was Minister of Finance; he was the core person there. In addition, the way we then decided was that if for this memorandum of understanding and for the meeting to carry any mileage, we would have to have any external consultant, so as to assess whether the MOU agreements have progressed as promised when it was implemented when it was agreed.

We invited consultants in to look at and to ask questions to the Minister from Bangalla and Civil society in Bangalla about its record of human rights, government issues and so on. When the International Development Minister heard about it, they were actually quite angry, they did not say anything to me, but I understood from my colleague that they thought it was too risky. I thought I was an academic and I did not care about governance advisor-ship, as it was not my career. If the DFID went wrong, it went wrong, but it just seemed right. That was the right thing to do. Therefore, I suggested it and my immediate boss has agreed on it and only afterwards afterward got a bit of cold feet. Our boss was told from above that this is a bit dubious exercise and there was ambivalence for a little

while. It was me and it was my suggestion. It was my first two months while I was there and a most senior governance advisor who supported it took it up and so it was he who had to negotiate this matter with the DFID. I knew that he was essentially told OK, we do this, but it is on your face if it goes wrong. Therefore, we went headway and it was a success. Nevertheless, we got a very competent person to do this external assessment work and he was one of two highest civil servants from DFID. He and the other person did it for us and of course, they were ‘smooth’ people. While they wrote the report they did not give minus points like C - or plus point like C+ but they said they want to hear that different views about the issues at hand, so as to document the situation from Bangalla. This documentation later led to good discussions with the Government of Bangalla. The reason I am mentioning this again, there was a leeway, and there was possible to introduce something like this (Fieldwork informant Larry).

#### **5.4.11 Using the agency for taking supra-authority decision**

The other incident narrated by Larry is about how he took the decision to close down a press in Bangalla using his powers as a Governance Advisor because it was not serving its purpose. In Larry’s words, it happened like this:

So that was the mood of those times in the DFID that you could do things, and I think I said I was effective because it meant people could try out things and had fun doing it. Likewise, I got a project on support to the press close down. Because when this five-year project was set up before, I joined and it was giving money to the government of Bangalla’s press and to make it technically better. In the agreement thereof, there were promises from the establishment that they would increase the press freedom and other

voices within there for the press of Bangalla, and when I finally looked at it after a year; I could see they have not done any of that. So we had meetings with concerned people and we gave them some months to change their ways of running the press. As expected, they did not change it and so we closed it. Later we heard that the Bangalla minister was not happy about it, but there was no way we were going to revoke our decision. We argued and we got our immediate bosses' support in the hour of need. We were told that we were opening ourselves up to criticism from the other donors. On one hand, we claimed we were for press freedom in Bangalla that we meant it. However, the government of Bangalla's immediate policy makers did not do what they were claiming to do. We had a strong counter argument. Consequently, the voices of advice were on the rise again but for no avail.

This incident again proved that in those days as long as we have an argument, we could have a voice even such politically critical circumstances and overbearing superiors. On the other, hand the worldliness. As my economist friend who was being told off and told to shut off clearly shows it was those few years when people in DFID felt that they had a say.

#### **5.4.12 Injecting 'social' into the WDR 2000**

The World Development Report (WDR) is the annual flagship publication of World Bank that is published once every ten years. It is meant to tackle the over-arching issue of poverty reduction (Maxwell 2001:143). The following incident is related to the making of the WDR 2000, which was significant in many perspectives compared to earlier WDRs. WDR 2000 was not only exclusively focused on the issues of global poverty, but also stood as one that bears imprints of a paradigm change on international levels in terms of poverty analysis. The quality of the WDR 2000 was outstanding compared to earlier WDRs in many aspects. For

example, WDR 2000 was not only focussed empirically but also paradigmatically on the nature and causes of poverty. For the first time in the history of World Bank, electronic platforms, such as the internet, were used to discuss and interact directly with thousands of poor men and women from all over the world in an attempt to develop realistic development measures based on their lived experiences. Nevertheless, the involvement of aid organizations, scholars, and experts other than World Bank worked both ways. It influenced the WDR and other stakeholders ideologically, strategically and technically, eventually contributing to the broader spectrum of the newly emergent aid paradigm. This mutual process of influencing shaped the aid industry not only in the following decade from the perspective of development objectives, but also in ways of understanding the causes of poverty. Economic analysis as the dominant paradigm to understand the root causes of poverty was, to the large extent, overwhelmed by the social analytical paradigm that is to say, a class-based analysis faded from the picture.

However, the theoretical and ideological conflict that rose during the preparations procedure of the WDR culminated in an international controversy that erupted at the resignation of WDR team director, Cornell professor Ravi Kanbur. The preparations for WDR 2000 were going on full swing. DFID along with leading development think tanks from the UK were some of the active contributing institutions. The SDAs and governance advisors from DFID were in coordination with the WDR team and its Director, who was quite fastidious about the usage of particular conceptual terms and terminologies to include the explanatory definitions of the social structural causes of the poverty. This incident involved a distinct social entrepreneurial dimension of policy intervention. The recollection goes like this: - during the drafting of WDR 2000, Ravi Kanbur insisted on the strategic positioning of key concepts on poverty analysis so as to include certain conceptual ideas that aligned with the

World Bank's views (fieldwork informant Alex). This was in an effort to show how the endeavours of the World Bank led naturally to the information in the WDR, such as progress towards the IDTs. The team director, who was quite painstakingly looking over all the WDR preparations, was insistent on the inclusion of the social analytical terms and definitions. He included a grid of key terms and their definitions on the strategic places all over the WDR report in order to promote the social analytical effect of poverty analysis (Alex). This offers insight into how social development practitioners have been utilizing their positions and opportunities strategically to bring about paradigm changes in the institutions under the stronghold of old-school political economists (as Kanbur puts it 2001:3). Eventually, the disagreements between Kanbur (representing academic non-economists, civil society) and economic ideologues from International Finance Institutions reached a breaking point when it came to issues of fiscal imbalances, lower inflation and external deficit. As a result, Kanbur resigned from his role as the team director of WDR 2000. Although the WDR 2000 was eventually published, this WDR retained the imprints of social paradigm promoted by the collective efforts of social development entrepreneurs, including Kanbur. This was an attempt of knowledge management and dissemination of phrases, terms, and, words with an anticipated buzz or cognitive functions; many times such procedures culminate in the rationalization the poverty issues, thereby legitimizing the logical development intervention in the poor countries (Cornwall and Eade 2010, Board 2007:702). However, in the above instance, the self-motivated processes of framing the WDR along social lines served social entrepreneurial purposes and were committed to the larger cause of poverty eradication. Such observations are also supported by Gardner and Lewis (2000) and Eyben (2003).

### **5.4.13 The Tao of making policy work**

This is another anecdote by a seasoned policy practitioner from the policy field where even an apparent failure to affect project outcomes was turned into a success through the deployment of unique attitude to introspect and resolve in order to find the answers. This account involves a freelance policy analyst and consultant, Ryan, who was commissioned to write a report on rural empowerment program run by the World Bank in the West Africa. This gentleman and his small team of three multiethnic researchers produced a great research paper on the potential policy implications of rural empowerment program. However, to his dismay and frustration, it proved to be one of the most unsuccessful papers in his career as a policy analyst. This policy product did not have any practical impact for the ongoing project. However, therefore, he started meeting, communicating, and interacting with the related program staff and ministers from this small West African country. Many times the local stakeholders and government official were reluctant to interact with them in the policy context. However, Ryan was determined and looked for ways to open them up. He started going to local recreational places, clubs, and events where the development professionals from different agencies used to hang out or get together. Mostly they had informal conversations on the positive or flip sides of policy and program outcomes. Consequently, to their own surprise, the state government authorized and entrusted he and his team staffed with two experts on local governance to implement the policy recommendations based on their own findings. Accompanied by the deputy minister, this team got involved in the technical work of carrying out its own policy recommendations, which were far more successful than the research paper produced. In the course of this action, this team did come across opportunists and people only concerned with their own profit rather than the welfare of poor. However, most of the recommendations were executed in favour of the weaker sections



of that country. The key informant credited the success to his pattern of doing things. Most important to this success was his strategic, unofficial meetings and informal conversations with ministers and World Bank staff and his convincing ways of making those people see what he could perceive.

#### **5.4.14 Judith makes a difference in Latin America**

This narrative tells us about a DFID bureaucrat who using informal tactics became instrumental in making the reluctant and corrupt politician from Latin America work jointly with DFID on its projects on tackling social exclusion of the majority.

After the acceptance of social exclusion framework as one of the analytical models for poverty analysis in DFID, Judith, one of the key bureaucrats left her job in London, DFID to work in the DFID chapter of Peru in Latin America. Here Judith's achievement was the implementation of social exclusion as a pseudo rights-based approach in the DFID programs in Latin America. Judith associated the concept of social exclusion with the fairly small amount of populations that has been marginalized for structural and historical reasons. Therefore, initially, she found the use and application of social exclusion concept in Peru unfeasible. This is because, in the Peruvian case, the majority of the population that was excluded. She found it impractical to use the concept of social exclusion in this context, but it was one of the best options she had. Nostalgically remembering her work in Peru Judith said, "You can take the discourse that works in political circumstances; it does not necessarily have to be your favourite discourse."

In Peru, the majority of the population was excluded by the virtue of its remote geographical locations, causing isolation and exclusion from the mainstream. Because the World Bank had used this concept and the World Bank had to sway over the Peruvian government, Judith thought it was the one concept she could have used to hold the government accountable. Actually, what Judith wanted to do was to get the Peruvian government to implement the poverty reduction strategy as they were just pretending to implement it rather than taking concrete steps. It was a small corrupt elite caucus running the country and the great majority of the population was living under deprivation and poverty. At this point, Judith said to herself, “When you are a political actor, you have to take advantage and to compromise.” She tactically utilized the term social exclusion to compel the Peruvian politicians to implement the poverty alleviation programs.

However, in retrospect, Judith thinks that she was able to successfully implement the social exclusion policy framework in Latin America because of the influence of the World Bank. The famous 2000 World Development Report had three pillars aimed at poverty alleviation. They were an opportunity, empowerment, and inclusion or reducing social exclusion. The Peruvian government was very keen on World Bank at that time. So actually, Judith ended up introducing social exclusion language in Peru. Nevertheless, she channelled DFID resources on sensitizing the issue of social exclusion in Peru by means of seminars and research studies.

It was because of Judith’s efforts that DFID funded a whole series of workshops with different excluded groups. A poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP) was written on Peru being an indebted, poor country. Moreover, because of the World Bank, they had a whole chapter on social exclusion in the paper. However, Peruvian politicians were not doing

anything about it. They were just trying to please the World Bank. Therefore, Judith decided to persuade the Peruvian Government to take practical efforts in their strategy by actually implementing the policy on tackling social exclusion. She did it rather diplomatically. Judith convened several meetings of Peruvian ministers of rural development and finance ministry to convince them the importance of implementing the DFID programs to tackle social exclusion as it was showing Peruvian government's commitment to the International Development Targets backed by the World Bank. Judith became instrumental not only in coining social exclusion discourse embedded in the rights-based approach, but she was also successful in joining DFID and the Peruvian Government in this campaign on the grassroots level. This entire exercise also involved introducing and implementing the DFID aided programmed targeting social exclusion in collaboration with the Peruvian government. Hence, the diplomatic attempts of Judith were responsible for benefiting the Peruvian masses neglected by the corrupt regime.

## **5.5 Discussion**

Narrative is considered as an analytical-concept within the anthropological studies of moralities. This is because “narratives are widely seen as a way in which persons make, remake, articulate, interpret, and come to understand the meaning in their lives and as such the analysis of narratives has become central to many anthropological attempts to understand social life in general and moral life in particular ” (Fassin 2014:204). My intention behind giving long quotes from the ‘social policy entrepreneurs’ was to let them tell their stories of their ‘social entrepreneurship’ in their words. Because I encountered lack of research on the

‘undocumented policy interventions’ conducted in aid industry, I contextualized the phenomenon of ‘undocumented policy practices’ with the analytical framework of ‘social (policy) entrepreneurship’. Giving the long quotes I let the informants explain their own narratives of policy entrepreneurship- how they did and why they did it. However, the ‘narratives’ of informants about their ‘social enterprise’ are preceded by elaborate discussions on the Weberian theory of rational choice, the ‘*solidaire economie*’ approach based on wider the human economy concept and the social entrepreneurship framework.

The closest studies on the quite similar phenomenon of ‘voluntary’ policy intervention out of solidarity I came across while carrying out the literature review are studies by Hulgard (2010), Nicholls (2006) and Dees (1998) and especially Taylor’s work (2010:236) with reference to the Noble laureate Elinor Ostrom.

Above-mentioned policy entrepreneurial feats involve some of the classic strategies applied by intermediary policy entrepreneurs or development practitioner. I interviewed a wide range of Governance advisors, Social Development Advisors (SDAs), former and present directors, academic-bureaucrat-anthropologists, anthropologist-activists, and development consultants. While interviewing them and reading their interviews between the lines, I noticed reoccurring accounts of undocumented and informal practices. These were the policy decisions taken, successful policy persuasions, policy lobbying, policy networks mobilizations and alliances formed across and within the recipient and donor, countries and aid institutions located in them.

These practices or actions taken by a range of development professionals in some or other juncture in their careers or professional lives were different from formal administrative modes of working or standard organizational procedures. These were undocumented, extra or

non-official actions aimed to get work done. However, some of these practices were later formalized as they fed into the broader picture of policy or projects run by the aid industry in the Interventional level so as to achieve the former IDTs and later MDGs.<sup>59</sup> For example, the official inclusion of social exclusion framework in the World Bank that culminated in World Bank's initiatives on social inclusion.<sup>60</sup>

The basic nature of these activities could be described as quite mundane, casual, regular, and unofficial. However, these acts were intentional and subsequently added value to the aid delivery from the development perspective out of the policy entrepreneurs' passion towards making a difference in the lives of people. The conscientious (human) understanding of right and wrong, individual convictions about good and bad, guide these undocumented social entrepreneurial activities, rather than the canon of institutional behavioural propriety or organizational dictates about the bureaucratic code of conduct.

These activities range from inviting someone for an informal lunch, casual conversation, introducing a colleague without explicit intentions, promoting, advocating and introducing specific ideas or policy themes, creating consensus, convincing intended people or gatekeepers about your convictions. However, the acts taking calculated risks within official settings were mostly directed towards social welfare and humanitarian cause rather than progressing self-interests. The undocumented activities included the manoeuvres of convincing one's ideas to someone else, cross-pollinating different ideas and themes through an official (ghost) writing the policy literature or writing on behalf of institutions, drafting

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<sup>59</sup> <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/socialdevelopment/brief/social-inclusion>

<sup>60</sup> <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTECONEVAL/Resources/SocialExclusionReviewDraft.pdf>

speeches and briefings to senior officials, counterparts and politicians (in such a way) so as to channelize, legitimize, normalize the ideas. The undocumented policy practices also involved reframing the concepts and rephrasing the ideas in order to make the disapprover feel comfortable with what they otherwise think of as problematic ideas and uneasy terms. These informal activities also constituted (well-planned) actions of (indirectly) mobilizing and employing the civil society organizations so as to positively encourage their parliamentary representatives to raise the questions in parliament or to lobby behalf of certain issues (information based on fieldwork data). However, one should keep in mind that one of the main reasons behind devising these ways to achieve abovementioned effects was the passion or solidarity of these policy practitioners towards poor and marginalized.

There is a good possibility that the tactics of coordinating, networking and getting things done indirectly or unofficially in the everyday life of aid bureaucracy could also be for serving personal interest or preferences due to individual political or disciplinary bias. It also may be out of stakes as well as biased perceptions about any theories or ideas based on empirical knowledge. It could also be for making a case or lobbying for certain projects or policy that might create job prospects for someone or other, which likewise could be done voluntarily with the aid of like-minded people within and out of the formal setup of the aid institutions. The previously mentioned possibilities could be a topic of independent research. Although, we could not deny the converse possibility, the findings of this study strongly hint towards the fact that all these unofficial strategies and activities were directed towards the social cause and not for advancing any personal interests.

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## **Chapter 6 The twilight zone of aid bureaucracy**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This study set out to explore the social life of policy ideas in semi-autonomous policy spaces, and zones within aid bureaucracy through the lens of undocumented policy practices. I have termed this the twilight zone of aid bureaucracy. By twilight zone within aid bureaucracy, I am referring to the policy spaces wherein networks of aid bureaucrats and (individual) social policy entrepreneurs exert their agency through voluntary extra-official efforts. Generally, these extra-official efforts are directed towards the pro-poor policy formations as well as to enhance the aid efficiency. This study has also sought to understand the rationale behind these self-motivated policy interventions along with the varied techniques employed by the social policy entrepreneurs, leading to what I have described as the ‘undocumented’ social life of policy ideas.

As soon as my research proposal was sanctioned, I set off to do archival research in the IDS archives. Thereafter, I started my fieldwork in London. Although I had three months of prior fieldwork experience during my Masters, the Ph.D. research was a massive learning curve for me. I faced many of the demons of Ph.D. fieldwork during this lifelong experience. First of all, like many Ph.D. students, I had to face the terrible reality that I was not going to be able to follow my initial research proposal, which would have been to work with Voice of Dalit International (VODI) to study the caste dimensions in aid policy formation. This project terminated for reasons beyond my control, and it was quite a destabilizing experience as I was personally involved in it. However, I quickly realized that such changes were part of the

course and that during the research process one gets both setbacks and helping hands alike; changes are not always for worse.

The nerve-wracking and prolonged issues of acquiring access to the Department for International Developments (DFID) main office and the non-cooperation by some of the key informants during fieldwork caused other diversions in my initial research objectives and methods. However, a question from my questionnaire played a pivotal role in the transition to my present research aim. It was a question addressed to the aid bureaucrats about an anecdotal or interesting incidence in the course of their careers, where they have tried to manoeuvre around mainstream bureaucratic form to make a significant change in a policy or at a practical level. The consequent recurring narratives of anecdotal accounts by key informants attracted my attention. As a result, I shifted my research focus from the life-cycle and traction of social exclusion *policy frameworks* (within DFID) towards the self-motivated and voluntary *policy practices* that influence, shape and introduce pro-poor policy themes and help poor communities from the recipient countries.

In addition, I also incorporated other homologous policy processes and policy practice instances in order to argue that it is not the standard, official, and linear processes of policy production but rather the undocumented social context of policy practices that forms the key part of policymaking.

If the formal, visible policy procedures constitute the tip of an iceberg, then the undocumented practices or the social life of policy ideas are equivalent to the rest of the huge



invisible portion under the water. That is to say, the emergence of policy themes and ideas do not flow top-bottom according to the authority or institutional hierarchy; the policy processes are not top-down or linear in their proceedings in an aid organization (Sutton 1999; Jones 2009). Rather, policy ideas flow bottom-up and through, from everyday life, venues and sources. Sutton (1999) calls it “chaos of purposes and accidents” while Crewe and Young (2002), Jones et al (2010) term it the ‘complexity’ that surrounds social policy processes. There are twilight zones in everyday bureaucratic operations wherein committed and non-conformist bureaucrats and development agents i.e. social policy entrepreneurs strategically shape and influence policy and the policy outcome with the zeal of an activist. Here, by non-conformist, I am referring to the actions of the aid bureaucrats or social policy entrepreneurs who go beyond the official procedural set up and take a risk to make a difference in the life of poor out of their passion and solidarity towards the poor. These policy enterprises or individual attempts of policy entrepreneurship are seldom documented or written about in policy literature or during and after the realization of the policy ideas. This is because of the nature of these policy practices. These policy practices are voluntary, extra-official, these activities are casual and mundane in its nature, therefore, overlooked, and often not documented. As I show in Chapter 4, the general theoretical literature on this subject and specifically in the context of policy practices in the aid industry is inconclusive on some vital questions. The questions such as what causes the emergence of certain policy themes and not others? What is the nature of these kinds of policy interventions? How the policy interventions shape the policies, how these interventions take place are so far unanswered questions.

In this light, this study sought to answer the following three questions:

1. Where do policy ideas originate from? How are certain policy themes and frameworks launched, promoted, advocated, upheld, and incorporated?
2. What is the nature of these extra-official, undocumented, and self-motivated policy practices that shape a significant part of the aid policy and development practices?
3. What is the rationale behind these policy practices? What role does the policy entrepreneurs play in it?

The nature of these meta-official policy practices poses a theoretical challenge with regards to how one makes sense of them, particularly because these practices challenge the rational choice theory, which is often how bureaucratic decision making is understood (which I elaborate on in Chapter 2 and 4). The social entrepreneurial nature of unofficial policy practices gives rise to the question about the theoretical implications of the rationale behind the phenomenon of the practices. The issue of rational choice theory involved questions such as: What could be the rationale behind such practices? Why do some development agents take such a risk while others do not? How does the risk-taking, non-profit activities of development practitioners I came across during my research fit into the rational choice theory of bureaucratic actors whose actions are directed by highly rationalized work cultures of modern bureaucracy according to the Weberian theory of the “iron cage?” If that does not explain it, then what could be the most suitable answer?

In this chapter, I will synthesize the theoretical and empirical findings of the study. This is followed by separate sections on the practical policy implications, the future direction of the research, as well as limitations of the study and concluding remarks.

## 6.2 Empirical findings

The Chapter 3 through Chapter 5 offers in details the main findings of this study. This section synthesizes the empirical findings to answer the studies three main research questions that focus on the nature of undocumented policy practices (i) its social context or origin (ii) the rationale behind them, and (iii) the role of the policy entrepreneurs<sup>61</sup> in introducing the policy ideas through undocumented policy practices.

### 6.2.1 The origins of policy ideas and its emergence

The following section discusses some important co-related themes from my findings that involve the origin of policy ideas as well as how policy ideas emerge in the aid industry. It highlights the mundane origins of policy themes, which are not bound within any particular time or geographic location. The convergence of these (often contending) ideas within the policy sphere of the aid industry is an outcome of processes harmonizing with development priorities of aid recipient countries based on the comparison and connecting of actors and institutional factors (Eyben 2007:640, Maxwell 1998:20). The themes are explained below under individual titles as key findings so as to help the readers.

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<sup>61</sup> Available on : <http://www.simonmaxwell.eu/blog/how-to-avoid-the-winners-curse-lessons-for-a-new-nutrition-policy.html> Accessed on : 13/01/16

***Policy ideas and frameworks have mundane origins***

As illustrated in Chapter 4, almost all policy frameworks, including the celebrated policy concepts, have their source in everyday life and social movements raised by common people. The findings on the mundane origins of most influential policy themes also referred to in research that discusses the origins of policy themes like empowerment and sustainability (Batliwala 2007; Andrea & Brock 2005)) which gave new momentum to the international development endeavours. One of the main examples from the case study of social exclusion policy framework exhibits a dramatic origin of this framework. Social exclusion as a conceptual framework originated from a small parish of France, a Chaplin used it to define a new kind of poor from his parish. This celebrated term from development industry was employed by Polish Father Wrenziski to identify 'new sections of poor' individuals and families excluded from mainstream French society. Later French social policy department picked up this concept and made it comprehensive adding more 'social misfits' to it. Further, this concept was adopted in European Commission and passed on to the World Bank via England as a form of new analytical paradigm. The idea of non-linear, bottom-up progression of policy themes goes against the common perception of policy making that only the top-level authorities systematically produce policy solutions for the social problems. However, the findings of the research in hand and complementary studies demonstrate that the policy ideas, concepts, and themes are picked up, internalized or adapted from the everyday life by various social policy entrepreneurs to be promoted later within the policy circles (Appadurai 1988; Apthorpe and Gasper 1996; Crewe and Young 2002). Appadurai (1988) uses the metaphor of 'social life of things' which perceives the exchange of commodities from person to person or groups to group as an exchange of the values enshrined in those commodities. Here the transition of social exclusion framework as a

concept pervaded in media and academia , later on, picked up and internalized by social policy entrepreneurs to be reproduced in international aid policy sphere could be likened with the ‘social life of ‘ideas’. While, Apthorpe & Gasper (1996) argue about the development policies in terms of frames and discourses constructed by stakeholders (i.e. professionals, policy entrepreneurs) with specific ideological and disciplinary interests, Crewe & Young (2002) underlines the social, political context of policy and policy entrepreneurs, empirical evidence and links that could bridge gaps between the development research and policy formations in aid industry. The venues of policy formation are the overlapping and intersecting layers of aid institutions, think tanks, academia, aid consultancies and aid bureaucracies. The social policy entrepreneurs are situated within these various layers of bureaucracy, academia, think tanks, and other professions (Grillo and Rew 1985). Of course, the idea they prefer or profess depends on their ideological, political agenda and disciplinary orientation (Lewis and Mosse 2006).

***Policy ideas are not time and space bound***

Chapter 4 demonstrates that policy ideas are not necessarily contingent on the social-economic problems from the developing countries only, but can also be formulated on problems faced in developed countries and then reworked before applying them in poor countries. In addition, the chapter shows how ideas from the past are reconceptualised to fit the present issues and its social-political context (Maxwell 1998). The timeline of social exclusion framework began in France, a “developed” country in the 1970s through 80s & 90s making its way into new millennia in WDR 2000 in World Bank, eventually to become a global parameter of poverty analysis for application among poor communities from “developing nations”. This exemplifies that time, space, do not bind the policy idea and more

so they are adaptable and malleable in development industry that is fuelled on its own “knowledge management and fact production” (Chambers & Alfini 2007; Board 2007)

### *Contending policy ideas*

The study findings included in Chapter 4 and 5 show that while there is often more than one contending policy themes existing anytime in the policy space. Marlyn (a key informant) informs us that during her feat of gaining traction for social exclusion policy framework in the DFID, her head of the department was not quite enthusiastic about the social exclusion approach. Marlyn's boss was inclined towards the ‘rights based approach’. Hence, Marlyn's initial efforts to push social exclusion framework through meted with a cold shoulder. Moreover, the gender in development approach was on the rise then, therefore, the emergent social exclusion policy framework has to compete with the rest. Especially Marlyn had to join forces with other policy entrepreneurs, political actors, and civil society organization for social exclusion to survive and flourish in the DFID.

The aforementioned finding coincides with an insider’s account of mainstreaming the social dimension into international development administration by Eyben (2005)

Therefore, it can be said that only those themes, that get the propitious circumstances of the right people, at the right time and with the right kind of leverage, rise to prominence in aid policy circles, hence, social exclusion successfully rose to the challenge (Eyben 2003; Batliwala 2007; Gardner & Lewis 2000). Here the salient features of propitious circumstances involve being supported by skilled and committed advocates who have success in forming a consensus, being in congruence with institutional priorities, having

practical applicability, and the capacity to reframe ideas in different contexts that are more appealing to those who would otherwise not support the chosen theme. However, Jones (2009); Jones et al. (2013) interpret these peculiar circumstantial prerequisites as complexity that surrounds the process of policy formation.

### ***Harmonizing within aid institutions***

Findings from Chapter 3 and 4 points to the tendency of harmonizing aid; that is while employing policy frameworks in new contexts the political agendas or development preferences of the recipient countries are taken into consideration. Top aid bureaucrats, as well as project managers from the respective country offices of the DFID, are always careful and vigilant about not going against the grain of local political development priorities, take conscious efforts in harmonizing their policy, and project with that the recipient countries. Although this process has its advantages and disadvantages, the research by Eyben (2007), Broad (2007) and Jones et al (2013) supports these findings.

### ***Comparison, connections, and convergence***

The findings of the study summarized in the conclusions of Chapter 4 show that policy themes that are advocated, promoted and incorporated into the aid industry go through processes of comparison, connections and convergence, which is in line with the expositions by Silver (1994:570) and Maxwell (1998:20). The policy entrepreneurs are the main catalyst in this process as they conduct the processes of comparison, and connection to cause the convergence of various ideas into policy themes and frameworks. These policy entrepreneurs are convinced about the utility of certain conceptual frameworks in light of their multi-sited

fieldwork experience and insights (Eyben 2007; Room 1995; Mosse 2005b). Therefore, they strategically connect the relevant human resources situated in various institutional nodes and demographic locations to form a consensus, thus helping policy themes emerge and get traction (Mosse 2005b). Mosse & Lewis (2006:1) call these coordinators, ‘development brokers and translators’, who, ‘assume the role of mediators and capture significant resources in the mediated cultures of development’. This mediation is termed as ‘translation’ by Mosse & Lewis (2006:1), however, there is a basic difference between brokers, translators and social policy entrepreneurs, and that is the difference of intention. Whereas, the brokers and translators translate the overarching global political paradigms into policies and projects, the policy entrepreneur focus on benefiting those on the receiving end of society and economy irrespective of political-economical systems.

The collective effort by the DFID social policy entrepreneurs of roping in various key economists, development practitioners, and policy makers from a range of institutions and academia during the making of WDR 2000 could be the suitable example for the aforementioned kind of strategic attempt. During the making of WDR 2000 not only the dominant economic paradigm of the global poverty assessment was challenged but an effective alternative social paradigm of ‘poverty analysis’ was introduced to highlight the political-social structural causes of the chronic poverty among global poor communities.(refer 5.4.12 Chapter 5)

The theoretical cases for the origination and framing of the conceptual framework of policy ideas need to be taken into account to understand the social life of policy ideas further and to make sense of the complex processes of policy formation referred to by Sutton (1999) and Jones et al (2013). Deconstructionist approaches suggest the appropriation of analytical-



conceptual frameworks from social movements by international aid institutions and development elite to legitimize, rationalize, and form an optimistic consensus on the development intervention into developing countries (Leal 2010; Batliwala 2007). Nevertheless, studies by Rist (1990), Stokke (1995), and Sachs (2009) underline the political conditionality of aid and the problems of consistency and coherence in aid policies that donor countries insist on in reference to recipient countries. Whereas, the social movement aspect of policy ideas from the research by Leal (2010) and Batliwala (2007) support the research findings. These studies note that the adaptation and reproduction of ideas by social policy entrepreneurs within policy spheres are framed by the social-ideological context rather than the superimposed, rarefied, policy-orientated, and institutional dimension of aid. In this case, the emergence of the specific policy framework within DFID towards developing the poor communities happens within the context of individual conviction about human rights as well as cognate practices. The traction of policy themes within aid policy circles subsumes the confluence of common interests and convergence of various individuals their expertise, experience, and resourcefulness in upholding and utilizing any dominant policy framework (Seur 1992; Sutton 1999, Jones 2009, Crewe and Young 2002). The policy enterprise by informant Judith in Latin America as well as the self-motivated act of social policy entrepreneur Ryan in the West Africa of connecting with the local politicians and stakeholders is a self-evident phenomenon of setting up connections based on social-political assessment, which converges into anticipated policy outcomes (refer to 5.4.13/14 from Chapter 5).

### **6.2.3 The nature of extra-official policy practices**

The following section will engage with the nature of extra-official, undocumented, and self-motivated policy practices that shape a significant part of aid policy and development practices. This segment locates the extra-official practices within its social context of everyday bureaucratic life where in social policy entrepreneurs often utilize the normal modes of performing the regular bureaucratic actions skilfully. The findings are presented under relevant subtitles and elaborated in order to facilitate a step-by-step comprehending by the reader.

#### ***The social context of policy practices***

Many policy interventions are self-motivated, extra-official policy practices in the everyday life of the aid communities. Some of the skilfully devised practices include the influencing and shaping of certain policy through casual activities like interaction, conversation, suggestion, discussion, introduction, and organization of events between individuals as well as networks of professionals connected via personal, political, and professional interests (Seur 1992:119). This kind of common human interaction and activities that result into everyday communicating, conforming, agreeing, empathizing, internalizing, consenting, and contributing eventually culminate into one unified action. However, the regular, normal nature of these social activities makes them nearly invisible or insignificant for many of us. We do not even think that these activities could be initiating a dialogue or policy discussion or forming a consensus on certain policy themes. Hence, we do not consider them important at all to be a contributing factor for any serious business like policymaking.

These undocumented policy initiatives and practices have always been part of what could be called the “informal work wisdom” or heuristic learning process (of social policy entrepreneurs), which are often alluded to in informal discussions and conversations among aid professionals and experts, but seldom included or expanded in any policy literature. These characteristics of the policy practices are mirrored in the narratives of key informants discussed in Chapters 3, 4 and 5.

### ***The mundane appearance of the policy practices***

These policy practices go unnoticed or undocumented due to the casual or non-formal nature of everyday human communication. These policy activities can be individual or collective initiatives of social policy entrepreneurs within institutions inspired by the personal convictions, ideological leanings, and political interests (Seur 1992:119). Hence, they are not found in an institutional rational base and remain taken for granted, covert, and less discussed. Their mundane and casual nature make it difficult to differentiate between the standard official dictates and these non-official personal initiatives.

### ***The salient features of the policy practices***

The social policy entrepreneurs attempt to influence the policy processes during its formation and implementation stages. This is to ensure effective aid delivery as well as efficient aid administration. Undocumented policy practices involve strategic ideological assertions, indirect counsel, oral briefings, implicit and explicit advocacy of certain policies and development interventions the actors were convinced that it would have a constructive effect

for empowerment and the betterment of target poor communities. These phenomena also entail the systematic utilization of agency on the part of key stakeholders and actors through the “policy windows”<sup>62</sup> (Jones et al 2013) within the donor institutions and the recipient countries that eventually actualize the policy in day-to-day life. Dees (1998) and Hulgard (2010) in their studies refer to the bureaucrats, officials, and policy practitioners who were seen to pull together the private and administrative resources to run institutions, projects, and policies that would create value for public and benefit the people. These policy practices could be summarized as the timely performed strategic and coordinated moves by aid bureaucrats, which have political, economic, and socially empowering import in the everyday lives of poor communities.

Theoretical examples of the aid policy practices and processes need to be revisited in order to understand the limitations and strengths of the abovementioned undocumented policy practices under the rationalizing “architecture of aid” (Mosse 2005:3).

Mosse (2005a) argues “both the critical and the instrumental perspectives of policy as an institutional practice diverts attention from the complexity of policy that involves the social life of projects, organizations, and professionals”. The linear model of policy-making was considered inadequate long before, and it was recommended that policy and policy implementation are best understood as a “chaos of purposes and accidents” (Sutton 1999:5). The semi-autonomous policy space utilized for the undocumented policy practices is characterized by “the factors of disjuncture and peopled by epistemic communities, mediators, and brokers” (Mosse 2005a:23). This could be described as the social life of policy-making that subsumes “the social life of projects, organizations, and professionals,

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<sup>62</sup> A term used in policy circles to denote an opportunity to influence the policy or policy outcome.

from the perspectives of actors themselves and form the diversity of interest behind policy models" (Mosse 2005b:6).

Mosse (2005b), Stirrat (2007) and Broad (2007) in their respective studies reveal the construction of success on paper as well as the rationalizing impact of knowledge management in premiere development institutions. Mosse (2005a:22), while reiterating the "complex agency of actors in development", concludes that the practices of development actors are not governed by "policy prescription, but generated by very different and diverse administrative, political or social-relational logics" which are concealed by the rationalising effects of policy (Seur 1992:192). These studies also allude to the concerted endeavours on the part of staff within the bureaucracy to maintain "business as usual" in the aid industry. A kind of resistance meted to any fundamental challenges to the status quo within an aid institution (Stirrat 1997; Crewe and Young 2002:7).

However, as observed in this study, these policy spaces are also used by certain kinds of ideologically inspired development actors who proactively intervene in pro-poor policy formation and development practices to better the marginalized living conditions of the poor. The findings show that these extra-official policy practices positively influenced the overall quality of aid delivery. This pattern is consistent with the observations made by Gardner and Lewis (2000), Eyben (2012) and supported by Crewe and Young (2002), but contradicts the findings of Escobar (2001) and Fergusson (1994), which depict the development industry as a monolithic mechanism with neo-colonizing effects (Escobar 2001). Development practices in general and policy processes and practices in particular, therefore, do not necessarily only work towards orchestrating the success or failures of development projects as suggested by Stirrat (2007) and Mosse (2005b). Nevertheless, in the hands of social policy entrepreneurs,

the policy processes also work in the favour of poor communities, as they are shaped within the restricted twilight policy zone.

### **6.2.3 The rationale behind the extra-official policy practices**

Significantly, these policy practices were driven by the thought of solidarity towards the target poor communities, doing whatever is in their power to better the lives of poor. The rationale behind the undocumented policy practices can be traced back to notions of solidarity, ideological conviction, and passion of bureaucrats and professionals (Hart et al 2010:13; Taylor 2010:236; Fechter and Hindman 2011). These policy activities can be individual or collective initiatives within institutions inspired by personal convictions, disciplinary inclinations, ideological leanings, and political interests (Long and Long 1992, Apthorpe 1996-1996a; Mosse and Lewis 2006).

The ideological leanings of the professionals aided by their professional and disciplinary insights spur these policy enterprises, which are triggered by the situations, and circumstances they witnessed at the grassroots level. Almost all of my informants, while reflecting on the rationale behind their extra-official policy initiatives, said that it was a “kind of passion”, “solidarity” or “a deep sense of moral responsibility towards poor communities” that impelled them to do whatever they could. One informant said, “it was an internal urge to make a difference, to make the world a better place.” They concluded that this urge came to them from their formative years with a liberal, humanitarian upbringing (See Chapters 4 and 5).

We will have to reconsider the rational-institutional model of decision making to understand the theoretical implications of the rationale behind the extra-official undocumented policy practices within an institutional set-up. This will shed light on the humanitarian objectives of these policy practices that originated from the commitment of policy entrepreneurs and researchers in academia-turned-development professionals, who saw themselves as championing radical causes. The institutionalist and monolith perspectives of organizations make it difficult to understand the complexity that surrounds the policy processes and practices. They not only obscure the role of state-centered technocrats and bureaucrats but also neglect the policy efforts of epistemic communities and experts who are trying to draw a golden mean by enhancing the efficiency of aid delivery from institutions while successfully empowering poor communities through opening windows of opportunity on various levels of aid bureaucracy.

Weber is one of the main proponents of rational choice theory or the rational model of decision making within the modern bureaucracy, which is said to have systems that focus on the efficiency, rational calculation, and control (Gerth and Mill 1958:56). According to Weber (2005), the “iron cage” of institutional rationalization deeply colours the decisions or choices made by bureaucrats. These decisions should safeguard their own interest within the confines of rational-institutional dictates, which are the standard official or technical practices within any said bureaucratic institution (see Kalberg 2001).

However, the findings from this study show that aid bureaucrats were creatively engaged in the activities, which were not a direct part of institutional dictates or standard official practices, nor were these activities necessarily going against the grain of aid institutional

objectives. These were voluntary actions directed towards the social development of poor communities located in the global South. This finding is supported by Grillo and Rew (1985), who includes the testimonies of colonial anthropologists working for the government, who assumed that their responsibility was to safeguard the interests, attitudes and expectations of local African communities, and not only the government they were serving. They derived this inspiration from the commitment to their discipline and moral obligation towards a broader international community (Grillo and Rew 1985). Hulgard (2010:297) defines the actor as an individual who takes calculated risk through his private, non-profit endeavours towards social–economical development of the public while working on various levels of institutions and bureaucracies. Informants interpreted their own actions in terms of “devising their own ways of getting things done” within the aid bureaucracy and development institutions, which signify the ‘policy windows’ or intervening spaces within the aid institutions utilized by the social policy entrepreneurs ( Jones et al 2013; Shore et al 2011). The work of Mosse (2005b) and Eyben (2012) support the findings of this study in their auto-ethnographic accounts of anthropologist-turned-development professional, in which they elaborate on their commitment towards the poor and the learning curve as an activist within the bureaucracy, as they perceived themselves.

### **6.3 Policy implications of this study**

The theoretical and empirical engagement with social science with development (as an international political-economic phenomenon, which also impinges on local social structures and cultures) has been replete with negative connotations. Criticisms have been levelled against development as a neo-colonial design (Escobar 2001, 2012), development as an anti-



politic machine (Fergusson 1994) and development as a growth of ignorance (Hobart 1993) that thrives through politically charged buzzwords and seductive fuzzwords (Cornwall and Eade 2010). However, a balanced social scientific analysis of the successes and failures of development policies and projects from the point of view of insider-researchers would cast focus on the constructive side of development (Eyben 2000; Magrath 2010) for both donors as well as recipients. Such a perspective can offer insight into the positive practical engagements of aid institutions with grassroots communities (Mosse 2005b; Eyben et al 2006) as well as help understand effective aid delivery. This is a perspective that has been comparatively underplayed or less explored in most of the abovementioned studies. The policy implications of this research are based on this premise.

Thus the empirical findings from the study show that the aid industry is not monolithic in nature but is subject to change to both negative as well as positive effects on project and policy levels, just like any other social institution. These findings are supported by studies by Long and Long (1992); Eyben (2000); Gardner and Lewis (2000); Eyben (2003), Mosse (2005b) and Hulgard (2010). However, further findings of this research prove that the dual effects within the aid industry may happen irrespective of the administrative authority and political-institutional rationality invested in the development agent. Here, the main catalyst is a peculiar kind of development practitioner who has been described as a social policy entrepreneur. They are the development agents who take the risk of conducting and raising the “social enterprise” out of limited resources they have. Guided by their ideological commitment and solidarity towards global underprivileged population these social policy bureaucrats connect, coordinate, and harness the bureaucratic setup to achieve their noble end (Hulgard 2010; Mosse 2011).

The findings of this study also underline the privileged position of development agents as insiders, which enables them to get a view from inside the agency (Eyben 2000). Simultaneously, the everyday lives of aid-men and aid-women (Mosse 2005b, Fechter and Hindman 2011; Apthorpe 2011) in recipient countries offers them (aid workers) practical insights and skills to make sense of real-life situations. The aid professionals gain empirical insights and technical-administrative knowledge due to their engagements with grassroots communities as well as aid bureaucracies, which they further utilize during the potential social policy enterprise. The vignette shows the professional position and willingness of the protagonist in an entire episode of forming a consensus on social exclusion framework in the DFID, social policy department. The voluntary enterprise of the social policy entrepreneur is backed with her first-hand experience with the women from socially excluded communities from the South Asia. In addition, she was in touch with the local activists and organizations. This experience and insight equip them better to negotiate, convince, and devise a way out on institutional, political, social, and cultural dilemmas that arise during policy formations and development interventions. These set of skills acquired by these development practitioners could be practically utilized in the following context in near future of the aid industry.

The aid industry is undergoing a dramatic transition; aid recipient countries of yesteryear, such as the BRICS nations including Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa are themselves emerging as new donor countries. The prediction about the receding flow of aid from developed nations to developing countries also indicates the changing role of the aid industry based in the global North (Sumner and Mallett 2012). This could be the role of an aid educator, as a sharer of technical and empirical knowledge on poverty alleviation and

empowerment of the global poor. The theoretical argument for this justification suggests the need for international aid agencies to re-invent a role of “aid expert” or a “hub of aid consultants” for the new donor countries to benefit new donors for more productive aid interventions in the near future. The new donor countries and their workforce will have many practical lessons to learn from the first-hand experiences of former donor agencies and its expertise, especially from the ‘social policy entrepreneurs’.

#### **6.4 Recommendation for future research**

This research offers insights into the undocumented policy practices of social development entrepreneurs in the everyday life of aid industry. Drawing on the research it is possible to go further and look into the phenomenon of administrative and institutional failings as a part of DFID’s work culture that triggers the social development entrepreneurship within aid bureaucracy.

Moreover, taking the lead from this study, future research can explore the life histories of DFID alumnus focusing on their formative years, various causes of commitment and critical anecdotal actions within the aid industry. Such research would enable the potential researcher to map the role of *habitus* (as Bourdieu perceives it) in the making and un-making of social entrepreneurs and conforming bureaucrats. In addition, it might give us a fair idea about the social-cognitive processes that embed the ideas, concepts, and belief systems in an individual.

Eventually, drawing on the findings of this study, there is a possibility of a practical project around the idea of policy innovation. More specifically this would be to produce a handbook

for policy entrepreneurs and social development practitioners from the aid industry that would guide and facilitate future policy interventions and better development practice. This study has would offer a firsthand experiential perspective on the social life of policy ideas and the key role of extra-official policy practices that forms a significant part of policymaking and development practices within the aid industry.

Oral history, semi-structured interviews and prolonged, topic-focused conversations and discussions in official as well as informal settings have played crucial role in this research. Moreover, we need to consider the number of limitations this study has faced as a direct consequence of this methodology. Because of the inability to do participant observation within the premise of the DFID headquarters in London and one of its main think tanks, ODI, due to issues of access, this study could not directly explore the official rituals of policymaking or the in-house professional work culture of the aid bureaucracy. Due to a lack of access to the physical or cyber archives, this study was unable to look into the intra and inter-institutional communications and relations between DFID, ODI and ICAI and the Select Parliamentary committee on International Development, a triangulation of which would have helped this study have a better critical analysis and assessment of the phenomenon in hand.

In addition, non-cooperation on the part of some key informants from polity and aid bureaucracy during fieldwork forced me to drop altogether a couple of complementary arguments on “policy windows” and “triggers of (specific) policy practices”. The exclusion I have experienced in the hands of key informants reluctant to share their information and inhibitive gatekeepers from aid institution central to my research made me think of my own approach and positional stance, which might have caused it. As Mary Douglas (1986)

astutely observed, the ‘institutions do not have their minds but the one who runs those institutions possess it, there is a possibility the experiences might have made the ‘gatekeepers’ cautious towards my research endeavours. Whatever, the reasons maybe this aspect could be an independent topic of research which would shed light on the issues of access to the field. However, this study has compensated the abovementioned shortcomings with in-depth formal and off-record conversations over prolonged duration with key social policy entrepreneurs who were at some time or other close with either of these aid organizations. I have also been able to enquire into the nature of intuitional power that leads to tactics of evasion, procrastination, and non-response to outside researchers. Nevertheless, the research strategies I applied have helped me gain proximity, trust, and rapport with veteran development practitioners by virtue of identification with their personal and professional passion, which can facilitate the attainment of future research possibilities.

## **6.5 Conclusion**

This study concludes that the very essence of complexity that surrounds the policy processes in various stages such as its emergence, formation, launching, advocating, formation of consensus, and its traction within the aid industry can be located within the often taken for granted undocumented policy processes and practices. These policy practices and processes are inevitable part of the everyday lives of policy practitioners in the aid industry. Undocumented policy initiatives and practices have always been a part of informal work-wisdom or heuristic-pragmatic learning processes. These processes are often alluded to in informal discussions and conversations among policy entrepreneurs and social development practitioners but have seldom been part of proper policy research.

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